

STEP SEVEN

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FADE IN:

EXT. A CLIFF SOMEWHERE - NIGHT

Cloudless. A full moon hangs in the sky.

A WOMAN (30), clad in a brown robe, grasps the rails of a three-foot-tall white fence on the edge of a steep cliff.

She WEEPS.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Come back.

The Woman turns toward the direction of the voice, gently shakes her head.

She hoists herself over the top rail of the fence, holds on to the fence railing as she wobbles on the edge of the cliff.

The night breeze causes her hair to dance in the air. She looks angelic.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Don't do it.

The Woman looks back one more time. A smile of contentment consumes her face. She seems at peace.

She peers down at the abyss neath the cliff. She removes her right hand from the railing, makes the sign of the cross.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Stop!

The Woman removes her left hand from the railing, leans forwards and leaps toward certain death.

EXT. ROAD AT THE BASE OF THE CLIFF - MORNING

The flashing red lights of two parked SHERIFF CRUISERS glow in the morning fog.

On that road, the crumpled, contorted body of a woman clad in a brown robe, now torn and heavily bloodstained.

A FEMALE SHERIFF'S DEPUTY examines the body as a MALE DEPUTY stands nearby, looking skyward up the face of the cliff.

INT. LOS ANGELES COUNTY COURTROOM - DAY

Filled with two-dozen PEOPLE waiting their turn.

SUPER: FOUR YEARS LATER

A BAILIFF stands at attention next to the bench of --

JUDGE SAMUEL SPECTER (60). His focus alternates between an opened case file and the defendant sitting at a table.

That defendant is NATALIE PORTER (30). Her clothes hang loosely on her frail frame. She's thin - but not fitness center thin - addiction thin. This could have been a beautiful woman once, now just worn and haggard.

Seated next to her is her LAWYER.

The male PROSECUTOR, young, obviously a rookie, sits at a table across from them.

LAWYER

Your Honor, my client has requested to address the court before you render your decision.

Keeping his eyes focused on the case file, the Judge gives a *stand up* motion with his hand.

The Lawyer squeezes a nervous Natalie's hand, gives her the *good to go* nod. She takes a deep breath.

Natalie grabs a WALKING CANE from neath the table. She winces in pain as she uses the cane to bring herself to her feet.

NATALIE

Thank you, Your Honor. I know that I've made a wreck of things. I know that I'm responsible. I'm just asking for some level of.... understanding.

(clears throat)

This isn't the life I chose. I never drank. I never did drugs before this. I led a clean --

JUDGE SPECTER

(still reading the file)
Yeah. I really don't care.

Natalie's mouth remains open - shocked. The Judge looks up.

JUDGE SPECTER

Sit. I don't rely on the self-assessments of addicts.

Natalie slips back into her chair. Judge Specter closes the case file, folds his fingers in his hand - contemplates.

JUDGE SPECTER
What am I to do with you?
(at the Prosecutor)
Does the State have any objection
to confined rehabilitation?

PROSECUTOR
(as he stands)
Your Honor, this is the defendant's
third offense. A prior for forging
a prescription, a prior for --

JUDGE SPECTER
I don't need a biography,
counselor. I have the file. Do you
have an objection?

PROSECUTOR
No, Your Honor.

The Prosecutor timidly retakes his seat.

JUDGE SPECTER
Very well.
(at Natalie)
I sentence you to one year in
prison. However, that sentence will
be stayed contingent upon you
completing a ninety-day treatment
program at the Restoration House.
Reports of your progress to be
submitted to this Court.

The LAWYER stands.

LAWYER
Your Honor, it is --
(off the Judge's glare)
Um, well, unusual to say the least
for the Court to require a specific
facility or program. I ask that you
grant my client the leeway to
select a program of her choosing.

JUDGE SPECTER
No.

LAWYER
Pardon?

JUDGE SPECTER
The court is not precluded from
selecting a specific program.
(MORE)

JUDGE SPECTER (CONT'D)

The Restoration House is well-regarded and I have been informed they have a pro-bono slot available. Your client clearly does not have the wherewithal to --

LAWYER

But, your Honor --

Judge Specter SLAMS the gavel.

JUDGE SPECTER

I sense that Mrs. Porter's chances are dwindling, perhaps they have already evaporated. Don't test me on this.

(sternly)

Would your client prefer prison?

The Lawyer shakes his head.

JUDGE SPECTER

Very good.

(at Bailiff)

Arrange for the Sheriff to provide transportation tomorrow.

(at Natalie)

Be ready.

Natalie nods. Judge Specter gives her a dismissive wave of the hand.

JUDGE SPECTER

(at the Bailiff)

Call the next case.

INT/EXT. SHERIFF CRUISER - CANYON ROAD (TRAVELLING) - DAY

A winding road in the Malibu Canyon. Greenery and rocks cover the hillsides. The Pacific Ocean is off in the distance.

A SHERIFF DEPUTY, hands on the wheel, a perfect ten and two keeps his eyes forward - focused on nothing but the road.

Natalie's in the rear seat gazing out the window.

NATALIE (V.O.)

I've tried three times to get sober over the last four years. I failed each time.

They pass a sign: *RESTORATION HOUSE, THREE MILES.*

NATALIE (V.O.)
This will be the last time.

The Cruiser turns up a road.

NATALIE (V.O.)
One way or another.

EXT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DAY

Cradled in the canyon, a multi-storied, white, Victorian house - bright red roof and trimmings.

A large iron-rod security fence surrounds the property. Security cameras are mounted on poles every thirty feet.

HARLEY BENSON (65), on his knees, clad in a maintenance uniform, tends to weeds in a flower bed near the house.

He has unruly, long, silver hair and overgrown mustache. One side of his face is horribly scarred from a burn - chin to forehead. He wears a black patch where his left eye once was.

INT/EXT. SHERIFF CRUISER - AT THE MAIN GATE - DAY

The Sheriff cruiser approaches. Natalie eyes the enormous security gate.

NATALIE
You're sure this isn't prison?

A dismissive look from the Deputy as he takes in the beauty of the Victorian house and grounds.

SHERIFF DEPUTY
Yeah. It's just like prison.

The cruiser comes to a halt. The Sheriff Deputy rolls down the window and flashes a badge at a mounted camera.

A BUZZ and the giant gates slowly open. The cruiser moves on.

AT THE MAIN HOUSE

Harley still tending to the weeds. He glances back as he hears the sound of the approaching cruiser.

As the cruiser stops, the rear trunk pops open, revealing Natalie's suitcase and tote bag.

INSIDE THE CRUISER

SHERIFF DEPUTY
Okay. Here you are.

Natalie grabs her cane, reaches for the door handle.

NATALIE

Do you think you could help me with my luggage?

SHERIFF DEPUTY

I ain't a porter.
(points toward Harley)
Ask him.

OUTSIDE THE CRUISER - SECONDS LATER

Natalie by the open trunk.

NATALIE

(toward Harley)
Excuse me. Could you give me a hand?

Harley turns, revealing his damaged face. Natalie instinctively flinches. Harley notices.

Harley stands and turns toward Natalie. Now visible, those same horrible burn scars on his left arm and hand.

He approaches without saying a word.

NATALIE

Sorry. It was - um, just that --

HARLEY

Don't fret about it. I stopped taking offense a long time ago.

Harley grabs Natalie's luggage from the trunk and heads toward the main building. Natalie follows.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Beautifully appointed and clean as a whistle, almost giving it the appearance of a place of worship.

ADENA AZI (40), Nigerian, beautiful coal-black skin, stands in the center of the room. She's clad in a white robe, akin to the kind worn by Buddhist monks.

Harley enters with Natalie's luggage in his hand.

ADENA

To her cottage please.

Harley nods, then leaves just as Natalie limps in.

ADENA
 Welcome. I am Adena Azi, Doctor
 Malcam's assistant.

Adena approaches, places her hand on Natalie's shoulders.

ADENA
 And you must be Natalie.

NATALIE
 Yes...

Adena embraces Natalie. A grimace from Natalie - not comfortable with the show of affection from a stranger.

Adena breaks the embrace.

ADENA
 (re: Natalie's cane)
 You have difficulty walking?

NATALIE
 I manage.

ADENA
 Very well. Doctor Malcam isn't
 quite ready for you yet. Let me
 give you a tour while we wait.
 (waving her hand)
 Please, come.

Adena heads off. Natalie follows.

DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Adena flips on a light switch revealing three circular tables, six chairs each.

ADENA
 This is where you will take most of
 your meals. It's a very regimented
 schedule. Breakfast at six. Lunch
 at noon. Dinner at six.

Natalie bites her lower lip.

ADENA
 A problem?

NATALIE
 I, um...have a hard time with
 strangers, you know, meeting new
 people.

Adena puts her hand gently on Natalie's arm.

ADENA

Sister, you're going to need these people.

LEARNING CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Adena and Natalie enter.

Library-like. Bookshelves around the perimeter of the room are filled with self-help books.

About a half-dozen library-style desks in the middle of the room, each with a computer. Adena points toward them.

ADENA

They're available for meditation and research purposes. All of the social applications, Facebook, Instagram, e-mail and the like have been disabled.

NATALIE

Because...?

ADENA

No outside contact is allowed. No contamination.

NATALIE

Contami --

Adena quickly pivots and heads back out into the --

HALLWAY

Adena's heels echo on the wood floors as her and Natalie return to the center of the house.

Adena points down the hallway.

ADENA

Group meetings take place in the old parlour and Doctor's Malcam's office is the last room at the end. Now, let me show you outside.

Adena heads toward two large doors that lead to the rear grounds of the compound. She opens them revealing --

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - DAY

An enormous patch of land, expertly landscaped. A cobblestone pathway weaves in and out between trees and colorful flowers - a perfect garden.

A dozen WOMEN (ages 25-35), all similar in appearance to Natalie, sit on benches, stroll on the pathway, mill about.

Natalie, limps behind Adena, doing her best to keep up.

NATALIE

I need a second.

Adena stops, turns.

ADENA

Of course, sister.

Natalie takes in the Women.

NATALIE

It's a bit odd, isn't it?

ADENA

What's that, sister?

NATALIE

The woman. They're all kind of the same.

Adena smiles as she looks at all of the Women.

ADENA

Indeed they are. Now come, there's more to see.

Adena heads off. Natalie, keeping a suspicious eye on the Women, limps behind.

FOUNTAIN OF ST. MAXIMILIAN - DAY

A sculpture of Saint-like looking man in the center of the fountain. Water pours from his extended hands toward the perimeter of the fountain.

Adena and Natalie approach. Adena closes her eyes, inhales, taken by the beauty and serenity of the structure.

She points toward the sculpture in the fountain's center.

ADENA
 Saint Maximilian. The patron saint
 of addiction. Would you like to
 pray, Natalie?

NATALIE
 No...I'm an atheist.

ADENA
 Has that served you well?

Natalie points toward the far reaches of the compound. There are a dozen standalone cottages, all about fifty feet apart - arranged in a perfect semicircle.

NATALIE
 What are those?

ADENA
 It's where you stay. Each patient
 has their own cottage.
 (with a wave of the hand)
 Come.

EXT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - DAY

White and red-trimmed, just like the main house.

As Adena and Natalie approach, the Pacific Ocean becomes visible as each cottage is situated near the edge of a very rocky and steep cliff. A three-foot-high white picket fence protects its perimeter.

Adena removes a key from her pocket, inserts it in the lock and they enter --

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - DAY

Pleasant - comfy.

The walls contain posters filled with the typical inspirational platitudes of addiction treatment.

A small, four-poster bed with a pastel comforter and several over-stuffed pillows in the center of the room. This could be confused with a bed and breakfast.

A small screen TV sits on a dresser.

NATALIE
 Cable?

ADENA

No, I'm afraid not. It's closed-circuit. Instructional videos only.

Natalie walks to the corner of the cottage. She's please to see her own bathroom - small, but it's hers.

NATALIE

Nicer than I expected.

ADENA

We hope to make it feel like home as much as possible.

Natalie goes to a window covered by curtains. She moves the curtain aside, revealing a window covered by iron bars.

ADENA

There are exceptions of course...It's for your protection.

NATALIE

From what?

A CELL PHONE ALERT is heard. Adena removes a smartphone from her robe pocket - eyes the screen.

ADENA

Doctor Malcam is available now.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - DAY

At one end of the room, a sofa and an overstuffed chair.

DOCTOR MALCAM (50) sits at a large desk at the other end of the room. He has a pale, angular face with a pointy chin, closely cropped white hair - vibrant green eyes.

There's an odd air about the Doctor. The type of man who can display a smile on his face at the same time that his eyes radiate disdain. Eerie - hard to put your finger on.

Natalie nervously drums her fingers on the arm of the chair on the other side of the desk as she waits for Doctor Malcam to finish perusing the contents of her case file.

Malcam taps the file then leans back in his chair.

DOCTOR MALCAM

No family?

NATALIE

My Dad died when I was six. I had a younger sister, Emma.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Had?

Natalie looks off, uncomfortable with the topic.

NATALIE

Cancer.

DOCTOR MALCAM

My condolences. That must have --

NATALIE

I really don't want to talk about her if that's okay.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Your mother?

NATALIE

She died in a car accident. I was with her.

(raises her cane)

And left with this.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Please be more specific.

NATALIE

I fractured my heel bone. It was crushed. Three surgeries later...

DOCTOR MALCAM

And no relief from the pain.

(of Natalie's nod)

Calcaneus fractures can be quite severe. Even with appropriate treatment, long-term complications are not uncommon. It can be incredibly difficult.

Natalie's eyes well-up - she nods. Malcam seems unmoved.

DOCTOR MALCAM

How long have you been high?

NATALIE

It started about four years --

DOCTOR MALCAM

I meant today.

Natalie's jaw drops open.

NATALIE

Today? No. You don't understand. I stopped --

DOCTOR MALCAM

Please empty the contents of your purse on my desk.

NATALIE

Yes, yes - of course.

Natalie removes her phone from her purse, car keys and places them on the desk. She fumbles inside for more stuff.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Just give it to me.

NATALIE

I have personal items in there, make-up, pictures of --

DOCTOR MALCAM

Now.

Natalie reluctantly complies. Doctor Malcam calmly turns the purse upside down, spilling the contents on top of his desk.

NATALIE

You have no right to --

Malcam raises his finger in a be quiet motion. He reaches inside the purse, inverts it. He does the same thing with the purse's side pockets. Nothing's there.

NATALIE

I told you.

Malcam stares Natalie down as she clutches her cane.

DOCTOR MALCAM

The cane - please.

NATALIE

I need it to walk.

Malcam extends his hand forward. Natalie's hand trembles as she hands the cane over.

Malcam stands, runs his hand the length of the cane from the neck down to the rubber ferrule tip.

His eyes locked on Natalie's as he twists off the rubber tip, then taps the now exposed end of the cane on top of his desk.

A SMALL PLASTIC BAG, stuffed with OXYCODONE PILLS falls out from the hollow shaft of the cane onto the desktop.

Malcam picks up the bag, palms it in a closed fist.

NATALIE

I need them! For the pain! You have to understand.

Malcam replaces the rubber tip, then slides the cane on the desk toward Natalie.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Adena will see to it that you get a meal before taking you to your cottage to detox.

Malcam heads for the door then peeks down the corridor.

NATALIE

Please...

DOCTOR MALCAM

(calling out)
Adena.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

Remodeled for group use and volume cooking.

Adena removes a ladle full of steamy vegetable soup from a simmering pot and fills a bowl on a tray.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - SAME TIME

Harley hangs a brown robe on a rail in the closet.

He crosses the floor and picks up Natalie's luggage adjacent to the bed. He exits the cottage, luggage in hand.

DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

Natalie sits at one of the circular tables, her arms wrapped around herself as if she was freezing.

Adena enters, a tray with the soup and an iced tea in hand. She sets it down next to Natalie.

ADENA

Sorry, you missed the scheduled dining. This is all that's left.

NATALIE

I'm not hungry.

ADENA

It's very important that you try to eat something.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - SUNSET

Adena and an exhausted Natalie, cane in hand, enter.

ADENA

We start again at sunrise. Try to get as much sleep as you can.

Natalie scans the room.

NATALIE

Where are my suitcases?

ADENA

They were taken.

NATALIE

What? Why?

ADENA

Doctor Malcam has requested that all of your belongings be searched.
(a knowing look)
You tried to sneak in contraband.

Natalie bites her lip - wants to scream.

Adena goes to the closet, opens it, revealing the brown robe.

ADENA

You can wear this tonight. Your personal belongings will be returned to tomorrow.

NATALIE

I want my own clothes.

Adena points toward a television atop a small dresser.

ADENA

There's a tutorial available.

NATALIE

Look it! I want out of here. You don't have any right to...

Natalie's eyes widen as Adena removes a latex glove from her robe pocket.

ADENA
I need to do a cavity search.

NATALIE
No.

ADENA
It's required, sister. You've
already tried to sneak pills in. We
need to be sure.
(re: the closet)
Please, put on the robe.

Adena turns her back to Natalie to provide privacy. Natalie
just stands there - hesitates.

ADENA
Go ahead. Best to get it over with.

Natalie retrieves the robe from the closet, removes her own
clothes and puts on the robe. She takes a deep breath.

NATALIE
Okay.

Adena turns around, the latex glove now on her hand.

ADENA
Pull the robe up over your waist.

Adena moves toward Natalie's backside. Natalie grabs both
sides of her robe and starts to raise it --

FOCUS ON NATALIE'S FACE

Eyes squeezed shut, jaw clenched.

ADENA (O.S.)
It will only take a few minutes.

NATALIE
No. Don't.

ADENA (O.S.)
Don't fight it, sister. It's to
ensure your well-being.

NATALIE
No! No!

BACK TO SCENE

Natalie, in full panic, turns - faces Adena.

NATALIE

Please, I can't. I have problems...there. With touch.

ADENA

I'm sorry. But you brought this on yourself. We must be sure that --

NATALIE

No!

Natalie collapses to her knees and then wraps her arms around Adena's legs.

NATALIE

There are pills hidden in the cuff sleeves of my pants. You'll find them there. One baggie inside a bottle of vitamins. That's all. I promise. Please, don't do this.

A moment passes. Adena removes her glove, reaches down, gently places her hand on a sobbing Natalie's head.

ADENA

Okay, sister. Okay. It's going to be a rough night as it is.

Natalie releases her grip on Adena's legs, leans back on her calves, sobs in her hands.

Adena heads for the door and opens it.

ADENA

I'm afraid that during detox we need to make sure you stay inside.

Adena exits. A CLICK signals she has locked the door from the outside. Natalie, still on her knees crawls toward it, places the palms of her hands on the door.

NATALIE

I want out.
(slapping the door)
I want out!

MONTAGE COTTAGE - DETOXING - LATER THAT NIGHT

- Natalie on the bed, hunched over, rocking back and forth from stomach pain. Sweat drips from every pore.

- Natalie in the bathroom, on her knees, vomiting as she cradles the bowl of the toilet.

- Natalie pacing back and forth, wincing in pain as she does.
- Natalie prone in bed, staring at the ceiling as she bounces her head on the pillow. She gets up, heads for the bathroom.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie in bed, her's hair wet, recently out of the shower.

She picks up a remote from the nightstand and points it toward the television.

The television comes to life. Malcam fills the screen.

DOCTOR MALCAM

(on screen)

Please select the step that you require consultation on. If you'd like step one, press one on your remote. If you would like step two, please press...

NATALIE

Fuck you...

DOCTOR MALCAM

(on screen)

Two on your remote, and so on. You may want to have your journal ready in order to --

CLICK - Natalie turns off the television. She hurls the remote against the wall. At that exact moment --

The cottage goes completely dark - all lights off.

NATALIE

What..?

Natalie starts to move out of bed.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Don't touch me...

Natalie's eyes bounce in panic.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

No, stop...

A MUFFLED SCREAM echoes in the room, as if coming from all four corners at the same time.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Stop!

Natalie turns, places her feet on the floor. She grabs her cane, ready to use it as a weapon.

NATALIE

Who are you!?

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

No...no...

Natalie slowly scooches back in bed as far as she can, presses her back against the wall.

NATALIE

Go away.

Then - FLASH - all the lights come back on.

Natalie trembles as she scans the room. Nothing's there.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MORNING

The Women are spread out amongst the three circular tables.

Natalie, balancing a tray full of food in one hand, cane in her other, awkwardly limps in. Her plight is noticed by --

SHARON (30), fit, dyed blonde hair losing its color. She stands, goes to Natalie.

She notices the dark circles under Natalie's eyes

SHARON

You must have had a doozy of a night. Let me guess - detox?

Natalie nods.

SHARON

(re: the tray)
Let me help.

NATALIE

Thanks.

Natalie hands her tray to Sharon, follows her to a table and takes a seat.

Also at that table, CONSTANCE (35), her nose buried in her AA BIG BOOK as she eats and GRACE (30), thin and frail, her head bowed, scribbling notes in her journal.

Sharon extends her hand toward Natalie.

SHARON
I'm Sharon. On my fourth week.

NATALIE
(taking Sharon's hand)
Natalie. First day.

Natalie uses her fork to point around the room.

NATALIE
Could be a PTA meeting.

A laugh from Sharon. Constance looks up.

CONSTANCE
You really need to take this more seriously.
(returning to her Book)
Your life depends on it.

NATALIE
Okay...

Natalie looks toward Grace, still feverishly writing in her journal. Sharon taps Natalie's shoulder.

Sharon circles her finger around her temple.

SHARON
(mouthing)
Crazy.

Natalie nods - ah, got it.

Grace finally looks up - smiles.

GRACE
I'm Grace. Two months.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Natalie, on the sofa, rapidly tapping her good foot on the floor. She's nervous - agitated.

Malcam sits in a chair across from her, making notations in her case file.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Your blood pressure and temperature were relatively stable this morning. That's a positive sign.

Malcam points his pen at Natalie's foot.

DOCTOR MALCAM
How is the pain?

NATALIE
Constant.

DOCTOR MALCAM
You'll adapt.

NATALIE
How do you know?

DOCTOR MALCAM
You don't have a choice.

Natalie looks off, sucks in her lower lip. She hates this. Malcam returns his eyes to the file.

NATALIE
So what's with the women?

No response as Malcam is still focused on the file.

NATALIE
(poor attempt at humor)
We kind of look like Stepford
addicts.

Malcam looks up from the file. He is none too pleased.

DOCTOR MALCAM
It's by design. I have a limited
number of placements available. It
provides me the luxury of filters.
Addiction recovery is far more
likely with a homogenous set of
clients. It avoids the excuse.

NATALIE
The excuse?

DOCTOR MALCAM
When an addict listens to their
fellow patient's stories of
struggle, their first thought is
always - that's not me. I'm not the
broken old man. I'm not a young
struggling teen. I'm not a middle-
aged woman dealing with the - *what*
the hell happened to my life -
depression.

NATALIE
I wouldn't think --

DOCTOR MALCAM
Don't interrupt.

NATALIE
Sorry.

DOCTOR MALCAM
An addict will look for any excuse to avoid confronting their addiction. When they are surrounded by their peers, people of the same age, same gender, then the - *that's not me* - excuse evaporates. They can clearly see it is them. Satisfied?

Natalie gives a reluctant nod as Malcam drums his fingers on the arm of the chair.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Are you completely disinterested in your sobriety or just intellectually lazy?

NATALIE
Pardon?

DOCTOR MALCAM
Your life is in shambles. You spent last night detoxing. Yet at this moment you seem more interested in mocking the profile of my patients rather than the specifics of your treatment program.

NATALIE
Sorry. You're right. I'm just not comfortable. That is I --

DOCTOR MALCAM
I don't care.

Eyes locked on each other, Malcam's unblinking. Natalie's uneasy - nervous, as if he was staring into her soul.

Malcam returns his attention to the file.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Every day there will be at least one group meeting, sometimes two. Participation is essential. And they are not going to be easy. Brutal honesty. No emotional cuddling.

NATALIE

I don't like sharing...personal stuff...with others.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Do you think that is your own special little fear?

Natalie meekly shakes her head.

DOCTOR MALCAM

There will also be daily one-on-one sessions with me. We will focus on the underlying causes of your addiction. Determine if there are other diagnoses.

NATALIE

Diagnoses?

DOCTOR MALCAM

Depression, bipolar, mania any other emotional disorders.

Natalie grows angry at the inference.

NATALIE

I don't have any of that. I became addicted because of the pain.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Obviously.

NATALIE

Then...?

DOCTOR MALCAM

My therapy isn't designed to discover why you became addicted.

Doctor Malcam stands, heads toward his desk.

DOCTOR MALCAM

And quite frankly, no one really gives a fuck.

Natalie's taken aback. Malcam takes a seat in his chair. He removes another case file from his desk drawer, places it on his desk - starts perusing its contents.

DOCTOR MALCAM

My therapy is designed to discover why you chose to remain an addict.

(looks up)

(MORE)

DOCTOR MALCAM (CONT'D)

That is unless you already know the answer to that question. Do you, Natalie?

Natalie takes this in. It's an aha moment for her. Doctor Malcam returns his focus to the case file.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Is there anything else?

Natalie starts to speak, then changes her mind.

NATALIE

(standing to leave)

No.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MEETING ROOM - DUSK

A large Victorian-style parlor room converted for the purposes of meetings.

The Women sit in folding chairs stationed around the perimeter of the room. Natalie among them. Grace next to her.

At the front of the room, Doctor Malcam, notepad in hand, sits in a traditional chair adjacent to an unlit fireplace. Adena's next to him.

They all listen to Sharon, standing front and center.

SHARON

...So after losing the apartment, I lived in a homeless encampment for a year - by the storm drain. I was pretty good at it actually. Made a little shelter from cardboard boxes. But then the storms came. I remember being angry when I was pulled from the water.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Angry because?

SHARON

I didn't just drown.
(at Doctor Malcam)
Enough?

Doctor Malcam nods. Sharon retakes her seat.

Natalie shifts in her chair. She suspects that she's next.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I believe it is your turn.

Natalie takes a deep breath, stands, then limps toward the front of the room.

NATALIE

My name is Natalie and I am a drug addict.

ALL THE WOMEN

(in unison)

Welcome, Natalie.

Natalie just stands there. The silence is deafening.

NATALIE

(at Malcam)

I really don't know how to do this.

DOCTOR MALCAM

It's not complicated. Start at the beginning.

SUPER: STEP ONE:

We admit we are powerless over alcohol and drugs and that our lives have become unmanageable.

Natalie exhales through pursed lips, tries to shake the nervousness out of her arms.

NATALIE

Okay...I was in a car accident. A pretty bad one. I, um - shattered my heel pretty bad. That's when I first started on the Oxycontin. They gave it away like candy back then.

Knowing nods from the Women listening.

NATALIE

That was nearly four years ago. Since then my life... My life was pretty much dedicated to finding more. It was easy at first. Just started visiting multiple Doctors. You know, getting duplicate prescriptions. But, that only worked for a while. Then, I um...I...

(at Malcam)

Is this really necessary?

There's no compassion on Malcam's face. Yet somehow he forces a disconnected smile as he nods.

DOCTOR MALCAM

It is.

Natalie sucks in her lower lip - bites it.

NATALIE

I was a hospital nurse. So, you know, naturally I had access to patient pain meds. I started to steal them. I'd give a patient Advil, whatever was handy, keep their pain pills for myself.

Natalie trembles, wipes a tear from her eye.

NATALIE

They would moan - in pain. Not understanding why they didn't feel better. Sometimes they'd scream.

(breaking up)

And I developed a tolerance for that. I let them lie there, screaming in pain as I got high. How does someone do that...?

DOCTOR MALCAM

And then?

NATALIE

I got caught. I got fired.

Natalie moves to take her seat.

DOCTOR MALCAM

How did you get pills after that?

NATALIE

Isn't it enough for today?

DOCTOR MALCAM

No. How did you get more pills?

NATALIE

There were Doctors that would, um - trade I guess. I violated my values in order --

DOCTOR MALCAM

Stop sanitizing. It's not allowed.

A confused look from Natalie.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Violated your values? Really? No.
 You fucked them to get pills. Say
 it.

NATALIE
 No...

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Did you fuck them for pills while
 you were high or while trying to
 get high?

Natalie's reeling from the question, disoriented. She stares
 at Malcam, then looks toward the Women. She can't find a
 sympathetic eye, they've been through this grinder.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Answer me!

NATALIE
 Both!

Silence.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Your life became unmanageable?

Natalie, teary-eyed, nods.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Thank you. Take a seat. Constance,
 would you like to share?

As Constance rises from her chair, Natalie, tears streaking
 down her cheek, limps back to hers, adjacent to Grace.

CONSTANCE
 My name is Constance and I am an
 alcoholic.

Grace reaches over and clasps Natalie's hand - squeezes it.

ALL THE WOMEN
 (in unison)
 Welcome, Constance.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie, asleep in bed, propped upright against a pile of
 pillows. She's still dressed, has her journal notebook
 clasped against her chest.

Natalie gives off a sudden shiver, something just made her cold. Then --

The DRAPES covering the window flutter, as if blown by a breeze.

Another shiver from Natalie.

She wakens, wipes the sleep from her eyes.

A quizzical look crosses her face as she spots the fluttering drapes - did she leave the window open?

Natalie stumbles out of bed, goes to the window and pulls back the drapes revealing the iron bars and --

INT/EXT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

A YOUNG WOMAN'S FACE.

Natalie SCREAMS as she jumps back in fright. Her chest heaves in panic as she stares. Too frightened to speak, because --

This is not an ordinary woman's face. It's bruised and battered, hair in a mangled mess. The skin tone is pale, consumed in an eerie faded white glow. The eyes are sad, but rigid, like as if in a trance.

This is not human. This is the GHOST OF A YOUNG WOMAN.

The Ghost closes her eyes for a moment, then turns away.

Natalie climbs to her feet, her legs trembling like a young fawn. She makes her way to the window.

Through the bars she can see --

The Ghost striding toward the cliffs.

WEEPING permeates the night air.

Finally, the Ghost disappears into the dark night.

At the window, Natalie's hands squeeze the bars. Her breath is short - panting.

NATALIE

Dear, God...

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Natalie on the sofa, nervous - agitated. Malcam's in his chair, pen in one hand, Natalie's case file in the other.

NATALIE

The first night, it was just a voice. A woman. A woman in trouble.

DOCTOR MALCAM

How would you know that?

NATALIE

(shuddering)

Stop...Don't touch me. She said that over and over.

DOCTOR MALCAM

And last night?

NATALIE

She was there. At the window. Crying.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Hmm.

NATALIE

You don't believe me.

DOCTOR MALCAM

That you saw a ghost - no. That you imagined one, is certainly a poss --

NATALIE

She was there!

Malcam takes a breath, closes his eyes for a moment - really hates being interrupted.

DOCTOR MALCAM

It is not at all uncommon to have delusions or dreams during a recovery. It's actually quite natural. Just synapses misfiring as your brain tries to grow accustomed to being in a sober state.

NATALIE

It wasn't a dream.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Of course it was. The alternative is an impossibility.

Natalie looks away, visibly pissed.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - DAY

Natalie on a redwood bench neath a shade tree reading the BIG BOOK OF AA.

Grace, writing in a journal, and Sharon, just nonchalantly taking in the day, sit in chairs next to her.

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

Natalie looks to her right, spots Harley staring at her as he tends to some landscaping. He averts his eyes.

NATALIE

What is his deal?

SHARON

Who?

NATALIE

The old man, Harley. He's always staring at us. It's creepy.

GRACE

He's always treated me kindly.

Natalie shoots Grace a *really* look. Grace returns her focus to her journal.

SHARON

(re: Natalie's Big Book)
So, what ya working on?

Natalie taps a page on the book.

NATALIE

We admit we are powerless over alcohol and drugs. It doesn't make sense.

SHARON

How so?

NATALIE

I mean, If I'm powerless, doesn't that just give me an excuse for a relapse? It ought to be just the opposite. You know, I have the power not to take that pill, that drink.

NATALIE

(at Grace)
What do you think, Grace?

Grace looks up from her journal.

GRACE

About?

NATALIE

Are you powerless?

Grace stares at Natalie as if the off-handed question somehow pierced her soul. Her eyes well with tears. Her lip quivers.

GRACE

Yes...

Grace gathers her things.

NATALIE

I didn't mean anything by it.

(Grace walking off)

Grace - sorry...

(at Sharon)

What's that about?

SHARON

Haven't a clue. All I know is that she's been fading since I got here.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - DUSK

Natalie on a peaceful walk around the perimeter of the compound. The Pacific Ocean looms off in the distance.

She approaches the row of cottages. As she passes Grace's cottage she hears something - muffled sobbing.

EXT. GRACE'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Natalie presses her ear to the door - nothing.

She knocks - no response.

NATALIE

Grace?

Natalie knocks again. No response. She turns the door handle and gently pushes the door open.

INT. GRACE'S COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Grace's hunched down in the corner of the room in a defensive position. Her arms are wrapped around her knees. She rocks back and forth - something torments her.

Natalie enters.

NATALIE

Grace...

Grace looks up. She's worn, haggard. Her face is filled with desperation.

GRACE

I don't think I can do it. I don't think I'm supposed to.

NATALIE

What are you talking about?

Natalie kneels down next to Grace.

Grace grabs the sleeves of Natalie's shirt and pulls at them. She is in full panic now.

GRACE

It's not right. It can't be.

Grace stands, bolts to her bed and curls up in a ball.

GRACE

But it's the only way out of here.
The only way.

Natalie rises to her feet.

NATALIE

Sweetie, please - you need help.

GRACE

You should go. I don't want any trouble.

NATALIE

No. I'm going --

GRACE

Get out!

ADENA (O.S.)

Best you leave, Natalie.

Adena enters from the open cottage door.

ADENA

She has had some problems recently.
Let me handle this. Please.

Adena approaches Grace on the bed.

GRACE
Don't touch me!

Adena wraps her arms around a trembling Grace.

ADENA
There, there now, sister. Calm
down. You know it's for the best.
Everything we do, for the best.

Grace sobs into Adena's shoulder.

ADENA
(to Natalie)
Go. She'll be taken care of.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - PICNIC AREA - DAY

The Women eat lunch at redwood picnic tables positioned under sprawling shade trees. Natalie sits next to Sharon and Grace.

All of them have their AA book open as they listen to Adena giving a lunchtime lesson.

ADENA
....And sanity is what we all seek,
isn't it?

Adena points toward Constance.

ADENA
Please, share your experience.

Constance stands.

SUPER: STEP TWO

We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

CONSTANCE
Before I came here, I was the type
of person who blamed God for my own
failings.

Natalie nudges Grace.

NATALIE
(in a whisper)
Hey. You feeling better?

GRACE
Yes. I get to go home tomorrow.

NATALIE
 (too loud)
 Home? Are you sure?

CONSTANCE
 Rather than viewing God as
 someone who could help me
 overcome them.

Grace smiles broadly as she nods.

ADENA
 Natalie, please. Constance was
 sharing. Were you listening,
 sister?

Natalie stares at her - really?

ADENA
 Natalie!

NATALIE
 Sorry. What is it?

ADENA
 Why don't you give us all your
 thoughts? You haven't shared in a
 while.

NATALIE
 I really don't have anything to add
 on the subject.
 (off Adena's look)
 I've told you. I'm an atheist. And
 I really don't understand the
 requirement here. It seems arcane.

The Women murmur as they look toward Adena.

ADENA
 Arcane?

NATALIE
 This is supposed to be a medical
 disorder, right? Addiction is a
 disease. How many times have we
 heard that? We don't pray to a
 higher power to cure the flu or to
 treat cancer. Why is it required
 for this disease?

ADENA
 Because addiction is a disease of
 the soul as well as the body.
 (with a warm smile)
 What hospital do you visit to treat
 your soul, Natalie?

Natalie takes this in.

NATALIE

But do you really think someone can just flip a switch? I don't believe in God - oh wait - I do.

ADENA

I never said God, Natalie. You did. A higher power is merely something greater than yourself. All belief requires is humility.

Adena walks toward a picnic bench and gently places her hands on Constance's shoulders.

ADENA

And do you believe that your sisters are fools?

NATALIE

No...of course not.

ADENA

Stop focusing on what the higher power is. Start focusing on what you need the power for. That is your path, sister.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - FOUNTAIN OF ST. MAXIMILIAN - DUSK

Natalie, cane in hand, sits in a chair next to the fountain staring at the sculpted face of Saint Maximilian.

DOCTOR MALCAM (O.S.)

Good evening, Natalie.

Natalie's startled, fumbles for her cane.

DOCTOR MALCAM

No need to get up.

Malcam moves behind Natalie's chair, looms large behind her.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Saint Maximilian. The patron saint of addiction. Your solution?

NATALIE

Solution?

DOCTOR MALCAM

Adena told me you were struggling with the concept of a higher power.

Natalie's taken aback, as if she were spied on.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Well?

NATALIE

I'm trying. I can't get there. I just don't believe.

Malcam rests his hands on the top of Natalie's shoulders. She grimaces, uneasy with the touch.

NATALIE

Please, I don't like that.

Malcam ignores the request. Instead, moving his hands closer to Natalie's exposed neck.

Malcam leans over.

DOCTOR MALCAM

If you are not going to trust God, find someone else to trust.

Malcam leans back, one more squeeze on Natalie's shoulders.

DOCTOR MALCAM

See you at the meeting tonight.

Malcam strolls off. Natalie takes a deep breath, relieved that he is gone.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

All the Women there. Malcam front and center.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Before we get started, a bit of news. Grace will be leaving us tomorrow. She's completed her program.

Light applause and congratulatory murmurs from everyone. Grace stands, takes a little bow - soaking in the attention.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You've done well.

Grace takes her seat. Natalie's eyes bounce back and forth between Malcam and Grace. Something ain't right here.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Okay, who's first then?

LATER

The meeting is over. Everyone's left other than Natalie and Sharon placing their folding chairs up against the wall.

NATALIE

Just seemed to me that she wasn't
anywhere near ready to go home.

SHARON

I suppose that's why he's the
Doctor and we're just the addicts.

Sharon notices that Natalie did not really hear her.

SHARON

You okay...?

NATALIE

Yeah, yeah... Hey, let me ask you
something. Since you've been here,
you ever hear strange noises at
night - see any strange things?

SHARON

Other than Harley - nope.

NATALIE

You sure?

SHARON

You're serious? What's going on?

Natalie shakes her head.

NATALIE

Nothing. Forget I mentioned it. I'm
tired. Let's go.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie's in bed, propped up against pillows, knees toward her chest writing in her journal.

NATALIE (V.O.)

(as she writes)

I've been a loner so long, it's so
odd to be surrounded by people -
all at once like this.

Natalie stops writing for a moment, sucks in her lip -
contemplates, then puts pen back to paper.

NATALIE (V.O.)
 (as she writes)
 But I am getting more and more used
 to it each day. Progress?

Natalie stops writing again, bounces her head against her
 pillow - then back to writing.

NATALIE (V.O.)
 (as she writes)
 I can't think of anything I
 wouldn't do for a few pills right
 now...I hate myself.

A DISTANT MURMURING VOICE from somewhere outside.

Natalie freezes - not sure what she heard. All quiet for a
 moment then - DISTANT MURMURING again.

Natalie creeps out of bed, closes her journal and places it
 on the nightstand.

She hesitates a moment, then heads toward the door. She
 creaks the door open to see --

NATALIE'S POV - SAINT MAXIMILIAN'S FOUNTAIN

Off in the distance, shrouded in the night's fog.

It's dead quiet, then --

A WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (low - faint)
 Hail Mary, full of grace,
 The Lord is with thee.
 Blessed art thou among women,
 and blessed is the fruit
 of thy womb, Jesus.

RETURN TO SCENE

Natalie takes one step --

EXT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Outside her cottage, stops - listens. Nothing.

She limps toward the Fountain.

NATALIE
 Who's there...?

A WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
 (now more distinct)
 Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for
 us sinners now...and at the hour of
 our death.

As Natalie moves forward, the Fountain and the Statue become clearer. Natalie freezes as she sees --

The Ghost of the Young Woman on her knees at the base of the fountain, head bowed, hands folded in prayer.

GHOST OF A YOUNG WOMAN
 And at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Ghost makes the sign of the cross, then stands. She turns and locks her eyes on Natalie's.

Natalie stands there - frozen. She takes short shallow breaths, panting in fear.

GHOST OF A YOUNG WOMAN
 Be careful...

NATALIE
 Who are you...?

GHOST OF A YOUNG WOMAN
 You won't see it coming.

NATALIE
 (screaming)
 Who the fuck are you!?

The Ghost takes a step toward Natalie.

Natalie turns, rushes back to the door of --

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Slamming the door behind her. She leans her back against the closed door and closes her eyes.

She opens them, looks down to the floor. Her journal is now at her feet. Natalie's eyes widen in shock.

She bends down, her hands tremble as she retrieves the journal from the floor.

She opens it.

INSERT JOURNAL

In shaky handwriting: M A R I A

Then - the words slowly fade away, leaving a blank page.

BACK TO SCENE

Natalie slowly slides down the door, holding the journal against her chest.

She reaches the floor. She then presses the palms of her hands against her temples as if it were her mind's fault.

NATALIE

It's not real. It's not real.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - MORNING

A beaming Grace, suitcase in hand, is surrounded by all the Women receiving hugs and congratulations.

Natalie, stands off to the side, arms crossed, a look of skepticism on her face.

ADENA

Time to go, Grace. Your car is waiting.

Grace walks toward Natalie with extended arms signaling a request for a hug.

GRACE

You haven't said goodbye.

Grace wraps her arms around Natalie's shoulders.

GRACE

(ominous - whispering)
Be careful.

Grace breaks the embrace. There's no smile on her face now. Just a firm, resolute look.

ADENA (O.S.)

Grace...?

An in an instant, a forced smile on Grace's face.

GRACE

Coming.

EXT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

A waiting car. Malcam stands near it.

Grace, suitcase in hand, reaches the car. One last hug of Grace and Adena turns back toward the main house.

Malcam takes Grace's suitcase, opens the rear door of the car and places it inside.

He gently places the back of his hand on Grace's cheek before moving forward and kissing her on the forehead. Grace closes her eyes, almost grimaces as he does.

Finally, Malcam opens the front passenger door. Grace steps into the vehicle. Malcam watches as it drives away.

At the same time inside the --

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER

Natalie, eyes narrowed in suspicion, watches all of this through a window.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MEETING ROOM - DAY

The Women are assembled. Malcam stands front and center.

DOCTOR MALCAM

So, as you all know, tomorrow is your family visit day. I think we ought to skip this evening's regular meeting so that you can all prepare, think about what you want to say to them.

A light applause from the Women.

Natalie looks toward Sharon. She has a beaming smile.

DOCTOR MALCAM

And one special announcement.

Malcam motions for Constance to stand up. She complies.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Constance's family will be taking her home. She's completed the program. Congratulations, Constance.

The Women applaud. Malcam hugs Constance, followed by Adena.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Alright then, you may all leave.

The Women gather their things, head for the door.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Natalie, a word please.

Natalie approaches Malcam.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I fear tomorrow could represent a disruption in the progress of your treatment.

NATALIE

I don't understand.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You are the only patient without family. It will be emotionally difficult for you to watch the others bond with theirs, receive comfort not available to you.

NATALIE

I'm sure I'll be --

DOCTOR MALCAM

You won't. It's best that you plan on something to occupy your time. Make it productive. Perhaps avail yourself to the learning center.

Malcam reaches out, gently places his hand on Natalie's shoulder yielding an uneasy look from Natalie.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Can you do that for me, Natalie?

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LEARNING CENTER - DAY

Natalie is the only one in the room.

She's lost in thought as she stares at a computer screen.

ON THE SCREEN

An ADDICTION RECOVERY help site. Information and photos under a web banner that reads: "WORKING THE TWELVE STEPS."

BACK ON NATALIE

She leans back in her chair, exhales through pursed lips.

She lightly bounces her head against the rear of the chair, obviously bored and tired of looking at this stuff.

The LAUGHTER OF CHILD from somewhere outside.

Natalie goes to the window and peers through blind slats.

NATALIE'S POV - REAR COMPOUND - DAY

A beautiful, sunny day.

Harley works several large barbecues set up in the center of the compound. The smoke from grilled chicken, ribs and burgers wafts in the air.

Adena, nearby, tends to a stand with sodas and water.

Throughout the compound, the Women enjoy the company of their families along with the food provided by Harley and Adena.

A few sit on benches, holding hands talking to their husbands or loved ones. Some stroll with their families, their hands connected to those of their children.

If this wasn't an addiction recovery center, one could easily confuse it with a company picnic.

BACK ON NATALIE

Natalie releases the blind slat from her fingers.

She returns to her work station, slumps down in her chair.

Natalie stares at the screen for a moment, then reaches forward and grabs the computer mouse.

She closes the ADDICTION RECOVERY web site on the computer screen and opens the GOOGLE SEARCH PAGE.

In the search bar, Natalie types: "HEARING VOICES AT NIGHT."

EXT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FRONT DRIVEWAY - MORNING

A County Sheriff cruiser is parked in the driveway.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Malcam at his desk. His eyes are glued on a --

A MALE SHERIFF and a FEMALE SHERIFF that sit in chairs across from him. They're looking at a case file. The tab reads: "GRACE NELSON. "

MALE SHERIFF
(re: the file)
Can we get a copy of this?

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

The Women eating breakfast at the three circular tables, enjoying the morning, chatting about their family meetings.

Natalie, hardly eating, really just playing with her food sits next to an animated Sharon. She's engaged in a conversation with JOLENE (28).

SHARON

I can't believe he's grown a beard.
I told him that he better shave it
off before I come home.

JOLENE

(with humor)
Maybe his girlfriend likes it.

Sharon playfully points her fork at the Jolene.

SHARON

You are so bad.

JOLENE

Well, not while I'm locked up in
here.

Chuckles everywhere.

Sharon notices Natalie's somber mood.

SHARON

I'm sorry. Probably shouldn't be
talking about family.

NATALIE

(defensive)
Why?

SHARON

You know...

NATALIE

I don't give a shit about your
family. And don't pretend that you
care that I don't have one.

SHARON

Alrighty then...

Malcam enters, Adena is by his side.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I'm afraid I have some bad news.

The room goes quiet.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Grace is dead. She OD'd last night
in a hotel room in San Pedro.

Murmurs and gasps throughout the room.

DOCTOR MALCAM

The Sheriff is here. They want to
rule out foul play and wish to talk
to each of you for background.
They'll be stationed in the
Learning Center. Adena will
coordinate.

Sharon blurts out a sob. Natalie reaches over, grabs her hand
to comfort her.

Malcam turns and leaves, Adena in tow. They enter the --

HALLWAY

DOCTOR MALCAM

Please arrange for a vigil this
evening. The women are going to
need it.

ADENA

Of course.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LEARNING CENTER - DAY

The Female Sheriff at one of the work stations takes notes as
she interviews Natalie, slumped in a chair next to her.

FEMALE SHERIFF

So she never talked about anyone on
the outside that might want to do
her harm?

Natalie shakes her head.

FEMALE SHERIFF

Had she ever expressed suicidal
thoughts to you before?

NATALIE

We're addicts.
(Natalie looks off)
Suicidal thoughts are in our DNA.

FEMALE SHERIFF

Yeah...but did Grace ever express --

NATALIE
 I hardly knew her!
 (clenches her teeth)
 She was an addict. Apparently not a
 recovering one. So what you think
 killed her!?

INT. LOS ANGELES COUNTY COURT - SPECTER'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Judge Specter at a large mahogany desk, phone to his ear -
 clearly agitated and worried.

JUDGE SPECTER
 How could you let this happen!?

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Malcam at his desk, phone to his ear.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 I didn't let this happen. She
 already had been discharged.

JUDGE SPECTER (V.O.)
 (filtered - thru phone)
 Perhaps too early.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 You're supposed to screen them, are
 you not? Perhaps you sent me
 damaged goods.
 (disingenuously)
 Your Honor.

JUDGE SPECTER (V.O.)
 (filtered - thru phone)
 Where do you get off talking to me
 like that? Don't think for a minute
 that I won't --

DOCTOR MALCAM
 I have a slot open. Please tend to
 that.

Malcam places the phone back in the cradle.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - FOUNTAIN OF ST. MAXIMILIAN - SUNSET

The sun just setting creating a dark orange hue.

Adena at the statue, head bowed in prayer. All the Women,
 including Natalie, are with her. Some weep, some don't.

Harley watches from further away, near a tree.

ADENA

God, our Father, Your power brings
us to birth. Your providence guides
our lives and by Your command we
return to dust.

INT. GRACE'S COTTAGE - SAME TIME

Malcam slides open each of the dresser drawers. All empty - nothing left behind.

He goes to the nightstand and opens the drawers - same result.

He goes to the closet, opens it - empty as well.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - FOUNTAIN OF ST. MAXIMILIAN - SUNSET

The vigil is still in process.

Malcam approaches from the distance.

ADENA

I pray in hope for Grace and for
all the dead known to you alone. In
company with Christ, who died and
now lives. May Grace rejoice in
your kingdom. Where tears are wiped
away. Amen.

WOMEN

(in unison)

Amen.

Adena turns, sees Malcam, approaches him. The Women slowly make their way off, some back to their cottages, some back toward the main house.

DOCTOR MALCAM

That was lovely. Thank you.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - CLIFF BY NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

The sun has just slipped neath the horizon. Stars begin to dot the black sky.

Natalie grasps the top rail of the picket fence. She leans forward slightly.

NATALIE'S POV

A jagged, rocky cliff face, several hundred feet in height ending at a small paved road at the base of the cliff.

BACK TO SCENE

Natalie pushes back from the fence railing, stands upright - takes in the night stars.

She wipes a tear from her cheek.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Natalie stares mindlessly in the mirror as she pulls a brush through her hair. Just as she places the brush down a --

Sudden chill consumes her body, like an arctic breeze.

She runs her arms - trying to warm up. Then the chill is gone, as quickly as it came.

Natalie takes a breath, fluffs the side of her hair and stares at her reflection.

NATALIE

I hate you.

BEDROOM - LATER

Dark, other than the faint light from a moon-lit night through the drapes.

Natalie's in bed, sleeping peacefully. Then, ever so faintly at first, the --

WEEPING of a woman.

Natalie's eyelids flutter.

The WEEPING intensifies.

Natalie's eyes pop open.

NATALIE'S POV

The corner of the room near the front door. The Ghost of Maria takes shape - just standing in the corner.

GHOST OF MARIA

I didn't want to do it...

The Ghost slides to the floor, brings her knees to her chest.

The WEEPING resumes.

BACK ON NATALIE

Eyes wide open - frozen in fright.

GHOST OF MARIA (V.O.)
But I had to make it stop...

Natalie slowly inches toward the nightstand.

GHOST OF MARIA (V.O.)
I had to make it stop...

Natalie stretches toward the lamp, clicks it on and sees --
NOTHING. The apparition is gone.

Natalie's breathing is labored from fright. She places her fingertip against her neck - checks her pulse.

NATALIE
What the fuck is wrong with you?

One more deep breath and Natalie turns and places her feet on the floor. She winces from the pain in her heel as she stands and limps toward the --

DARKENED BATHROOM

She leans over the sink, turns on the faucet and cups water in her hands, splashing it on her face, over and over.

Natalie stands back up, flips the bathroom light switch and --
SCREAMS!

On the mirror, crudely written in blood, the words:

MAKE IT STOP.

Natalie bolts from the bathroom, through the bedroom and bursts out to the --

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - NIGHT

And dashes toward the main building.

NATALIE
Help! Help!

She trips as she passes the Fountain of Saint Maximilian and sprawls to the ground. She rights herself resumes her run.

NATALIE
Help! Help!

Finally reaching the rear doors of the --

MAIN HOUSE

Natalie frantically slams her hands on the door.

NATALIE

Help me!

The windows brighten. The lights have been turned on.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Natalie, jaw dropped, stares at the mirror in disbelief.

NATALIE

I swear to God, it was there.

She turns to her right toward --

Malcam and Adena, waiting just outside the bathroom.

NATALIE

You have to believe me.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I want to see you first thing in the morning.

(turning to Adena.)

Stay with her until she falls back to sleep.

ADENA

Of course.

Malcam heads for the door. Adena reaches in, gently grabs Natalie's arm.

ADENA

Come, sister. You need to sleep.

NATALIE

(calling out)

You have to believe me!

The SLAM of the door as Malcam exits.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Malcam at his desk, his eyes glued to his computer screen.

ON MALCAM'S COMPUTER SCREEN

Birds-eye POV Security camera footage of the rear compound of Natalie's run from her cottage to the main house.

- Natalie screaming for help as she bursts from her cottage, running toward the --

- Fountain of Saint Maximilian, tripping and falling to the ground. Scrambling to her feet, screaming as she dashes toward the main house.

BACK TO SCENE

Malcam's eyes narrow as he stares at the screen. He clicks the mouse with his right hand - replays the footage.

A TAP-TAP-TAP on the door jamb.

NATALIE (O.S.)
I'm ready.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Take a seat.

DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

Natalie on a sofa gazing out the window. Malcam at his desk.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Make it stop. Did that mean anything to you?

Natalie shakes her head.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Any other visions you haven't shared with me?

No response. Natalie still staring out the window.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Natalie!

NATALIE
Yes. I saw her - the ghost. She was at the fountain - praying. She wrote her name in my journal.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Can I see it? What she wrote?

NATALIE
No. It faded away. Like the mirror.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Like all your delusions.

Natalie starts to say more but stops. She's not going to win this battle.

DOCTOR MALCAM
It's not obvious? The causality?

NATALIE
No...

DOCTOR MALCAM
You detox. You have a delusion. You feel alone in a strange place - another delusion. Grace dies. And another delusion. It's obviously your coping mechanism, at least on a subconscious level.

NATALIE
(indignant)
It is not.

Malcam gives Natalie a long, judgemental stare.

DOCTOR MALCAM
It is NOT unlike the delusion of physical pain you create to justify feeding your addiction.

NATALIE
What are you talking about?

Malcam stands, walks over to the sofa.

He bends down to one knee.

NATALIE
What are you doing!?

DOCTOR MALCAM
Sssh.

Natalie's legs tremble as Malcam removes the shoe from her damaged foot. He presses his forefinger inside his thumb.

DOCTOR MALCAM
This.

Then forcefully flicks his forefinger against Natalie's heel.

NATALIE
Ouch!

DOCTOR MALCAM
Is all in your mind.

NATALIE

Fuck you!

Natalie starts to get up. Malcam grabs her arm, forces her back into the chair.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Don't move.

Malcam stands, walks back toward his desk, places his hand on top of the back of his computer screen.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Last night you ran all the way from your cottage to the main house.

NATALIE

Yes. And...?

Malcam turns the computer screen toward Natalie. The security footage he was watching earlier is playing.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You ran freely. Without pain. Not a glimmer of it.

Natalie's eyes are glued to the footage on the screen.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You feel pain now merely because you have chosen to hold on to it. Probably because you are not progressing through the steps.

NATALIE

I'm doing my --

DOCTOR MALCAM

Perhaps it's time to avail yourself to the strength of a higher power.

SUPER: STEP THREE

We've made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

NATALIE

I've tried. I just don't believe.

DOCTOR MALCAM

And yet your options are limitless. To turn our lives over to the care of God as we understood him. It can be anything. It can be anyone.

Natalie shakes her head - confused.

Malcam walks toward the wall, places his hand on the light dimmer switch.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Do you want the pain to go away?

Natalie nods.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Lay down on the sofa.

Malcam dims the lights.

A BIT LATER

The office lights are dimmed. Natalie, eyes closed, hands folded on her stomach, lies on the sofa - a hypnotic state.

Malcam's in a chair right next to her.

DOCTOR MALCAM

(slow - hypnotic)

The pain left your body long ago.
Do you understand?

NATALIE

Yes.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You have not remained addicted to
cure your pain. You have remained
in pain to feed your addiction. Do
you understand?

NATALIE

Yes.

DOCTOR MALCAM (V.O.)

When I touch your temple, you will
awaken, fresh and alert. The pain
in your heel will be gone. Do you
understand?

NATALIE

Yes.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Very good, Natalie. Sit up straight
now.

Natalie, eyes still closed, rights herself. Her head slumps forward, her chin resting on her upper chest.

Malcam stands, walks to the wall, raises the light dimmer.

He returns to the end of the sofa, stares at Natalie for a moment then places his right palm on Natalie's temple.

Natalie's eyes pop open. She looks around the room trying to gain her orientation.

DOCTOR MALCAM

How do you feel?

NATALIE

Good...I feel good.

(a bit confused)

I'm sorry. You were saying?

DOCTOR MALCAM

That sometimes prayers are answered
by the ones you least expect to
answer them.

Malcam stands. He returns to his desk, picks up a notepad.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I need to go see Adena about
tomorrow's schedule. You may leave.

Malcam starts to exit - stops.

DOCTOR MALCAM

What was the name?

NATALIE

Pardon?

DOCTOR MALCAM

Your ghost. You said she wrote your
name in her journal.

NATALIE

Maria.

Malcam doesn't move for a moment. He just stares at Natalie.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Thank you.

Malcam exits.

Natalie just sits there for a moment - ponders what happened.

Finally, she grabs her cane, carefully rises, putting her full weight on her heel. She takes a step then --

Stands there a second, surprised - no pain. She takes another cautious step - no pain.

She raises the cane off the ground, takes another step. A tear of joy flows down her cheek - no pain.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

A joyful Natalie bursts out the main house doors.

She spots Sharon.

Natalie walks over, places her hands on both sides of Sharon's face and plants a kiss on her forehead.

NATALIE

I love this place.

Sharon's taken aback - has her friend gone mad?

Natalie moves toward her cottage. Slowly at first, then faster as she erupts into a joyous run.

EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DAY

A large tent set up on the grass just at the point that it meets the sand.

The Women sit in portable deck chairs in and around the tent. All relaxed, sipping sodas and teas and enjoying the view of the Pacific Ocean.

Harley mans a small cooker - burgers and dogs. A few of the Women stand near him, their paper plates extended waiting to be served.

About fifty feet away, Adena and Natalie stroll on the sand nearer the water, both holding their sandals in their hands.

NATALIE

I think this is the first time I've been to the beach since the accident. We should have outings more often. It's so nice to have a break from talking about addiction.

ADENA

It is lovely. How is your foot?

NATALIE

No pain at all. Like a miracle.

ADENA
Perhaps not like one, sister.
Perhaps it was one.

Natalie takes this.

ADENA
You remind me of me when I first
came to Restoration House.

NATALIE
How so?

ADENA
Stubborn, strong-headed.
(a beat)
Faithless.

NATALIE
You? Really?

ADENA
Through Doctor Malcam I have been
restored. Much like he restored
your foot.

NATALIE
Hmm.

ADENA
Don't forget to show him your
gratitude for that.

The comment throws Natalie off. Adena grabs her hand.

ADENA
Come, let's get some food.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Malcam at his desk. Natalie on the sofa.

Malcam holds up a piece of paper. It's blank other than the
heading *MORAL INVENTORY* at the top of the page.

DOCTOR MALCAM
I believe that you're ready for
this now.

SUPER: STEP FOUR

***We've made a searching and fearless moral inventory of
ourselves.***

Malcam rises from his desk chair, walks over to Natalie, hands her the piece of paper as he takes a seat.

Natalie stares at the blank piece of paper.

NATALIE

I don't think so.

DOCTOR MALCAM

If you do not identify your character flaws, how can you ever expect to overcome them? Start with the fact that you are a liar.

Natalie glares at Malcam - angry.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Don't feel offended. All addicts are.

Natalie reluctantly complies, writes *I am a liar* on the piece of paper.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Good. Now I want you to spend the day working on your inventory. There are only two basic requirements. Brutal self-honesty. Complete disclosure. No secrets.

Natalie shakes her head - resistant.

Malcam reaches over and gently places his hand on Natalie's knee. This yields an instant - *WTF look* - from Natalie.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Secrets undermine recovery. Part of the reason you're an addict is that you have trouble separating fact from fiction. The lies you have told yourself have had a cumulative effect, creating a distortion of your reality.

Malcam releases his hand from Natalie's knee.

DOCTOR MALCAM

And those are the lies you must reveal.

NATALIE

Because...?

Malcam rises, returns to his desk.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Because while you are the only person who can create a moral inventory of yourself, you are the worst person to validate its authenticity.

NATALIE

And the best person?

DOCTOR MALCAM

Anyone else.

Natalie's jaw tightens. Malcam turns in his chair, looks for another case file in the cabinet.

DOCTOR MALCAM

There's a computer program available in the learning center that will help you with your inventory. Adena can assist you.

Malcam notices that Natalie hasn't moved.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Go. We're done here.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LEARNING CENTER - DAY

Natalie at a computer work station. Adena sits in a chair off to the side.

Natalie runs her hands through her hair, stretches her back - she's been at this for a while.

NATALIE

This is hard.

ADENA

That's because you are self-judging your thoughts rather than just writing them down. Let's try something else.

Adena motions toward the computer keyboard. Natalie places her fingers on it.

ADENA

Create categories. Start with what do I fear?

(off Natalie's inaction)

Go ahead, sister. Enter it.

Natalie taps the keys of the keyboard.

ADENA

Next, what do I resent?
 (Natalie types)
 What do I feel shame for?
 (Natalie types)
 What do I feel guilt for?
 (Natalie types)
 What secrets do I have?
 (Natalie types)
 What am I angry about?

Natalie types in the last statement.

ADENA

Now, start answering those questions. Honestly, without self-judgment. You'll be able to create your inventory off the answers.

Natalie nods - this is helpful.

NATALIE

I'd like to be alone if that's okay.

ADENA

Of course.
 (standing up)
 When you're done, be sure to print it out for your journal. You can decide who you are going to share it with later.

Natalie nods. Adena strolls away.

LATER

Natalie rapidly tapping the keys of the keyboard. She stops, looks at the screen. A self-satisfied smile crosses her face.

She moves the mouse cursor to the print icon - clicks.

A printer on a table next to her hums to life as the inventory prints here and --

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DOCTOR MALCAM'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Simultaneously on a printer in Malcam's office.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - DUSK

Natalie, holding her inventory and journal in hand, exits the doors of the main building.

She scans the grounds as she walks. She spots --

Harley using an axe to split firewood. In between whacks, he spots Natalie staring at him.

Harley drops his axe to the ground, removes his work gloves. Taking that is an invitation, Natalie walks toward him.

Harley sizes her up as she nears.

HARLEY

I see you no longer got a need for your cane.

NATALIE

You're pretty observant.

HARLEY

I pay attention.

NATALIE

Good.

Natalie swivels her head around, makes sure that no one is within earshot.

NATALIE

Let me ask you something. You hear any strange sounds around here at night lately.

HARLEY

Sounds?

NATALIE

Like a woman's voice?

HARLEY

I heard you screaming the other night. From what I could tell, at nothing in particular.

NATALIE

(a bit embarrassed)
Yeah...just a nightmare. Have you heard anything else?

Harley pauses in his response - not sure whether to share.

HARLEY

Grace. I use to hear her.

NATALIE

Grace? Hear what exactly?

HARLEY

Crying. She used to walk around at night, sobbing. Like she lost a child or something. Desperate.

NATALIE

Did you ever ask her why?

Harley uses his sleeve to wipe sweat from his brow.

HARLEY

Yeah. She said she couldn't say. Probably wasn't any of my business anyway.

Harley picks up his axe.

NATALIE

Can I ask...
(points at her face)
What happened to you?

Harley reaches inside his shirt, extracts a silver dog tag connected to a chain around his neck.

HARLEY

Blown to shit in the bombing of the U.S embassy in Beirut, nineteen, eighty-three.

NATALIE

I'm so sorry.

HARLEY

No pity.

Natalie nods - she gets it.

HARLEY

Got out and became an addict in pretty short order. Got treatment here.

NATALIE

Here...?

HARLEY

They took both men and women back then. I was pretty handy so they offered to keep me on afterwards. You know, keep the place up. It worked out. I didn't have any place to go anyway.

Natalie stares at Harley - how could have she misjudged him so badly.

HARLEY

If you're done gawking, I got to put my tools away before dark.

NATALIE

Oh - no, I wasn't --

HARLEY

Grace was a good girl from what I could tell. You seem to be one too. You make sure that you tend to those nightmares of yours.

NATALIE

Thanks...

Harley heads off toward the maintenance building.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Pitch dark.

Natalie asleep in bed, in a fetal position hugging a pillow against her torso. Then --

BUZZ - BUZZ. The TV screen flickers on and off, just a snowy screen - then black. Another snowy screen - then black, as if it were trying to come to life.

Natalie stirs, opens her eyes - sees the TV.

She rises, turns and puts her feet on the floor. The snowy screen fades to a full image of --

The Ghost of Maria - fuzzy, non-distinct at first.

GHOST OF MARIA

Save yourself...

Natalie trembles as Maria's image becomes clearer. Her clothes torn, face bruised, hair a tangled mess.

Natalie gasps in fright.

GHOST OF MARIA

Get out.

The TV clicks off. The room's pitch dark again.

OVER BLACK

The muffled sound of Natalie screaming into a pillow.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - PRE-DAWN

Natalie frantically stuffs her belongings in a suitcase.

She pauses, scans the room - is she missing anything?

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LOBBY - PRE-DAWN

Dimly lit, no one around.

Natalie, suitcase in hand, tip-toes through the lobby area checking left and right as she makes her way toward the --

MAIN DOOR

She grabs the latch of a dead-bolt, turns it. The CLACK echoes in the empty room.

Natalie waits a moment. She inhales a lung-full of courage then opens the door.

A piercing SCREECH of an alarm blares.

NATALIE

Fuck!

Natalie scurries out the door to the --

EXT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - SUNRISE

And runs for her life toward the --

IRON ROD SECURITY FENCE

She reaches it, out of breath. She grabs the gate handle and tries to turn it - no luck, it's locked.

NATALIE

Damn it!

She places her suitcase on the ground. Then raises one leg, plants her foot on top of it as she grabs the iron rods and futilely tries to scale the fence.

ADENA (O.S.)

Natalie.

Natalie turns her head toward Adena, just ten feet away.

ADENA

What are you doing, sister?

Natalie gets off the suitcase, then slides down to the ground - distraught and defeated. She buries her face in her hands.

NATALIE

I have to get out of here.

ADENA

(approaching Natalie)
You know that's not possible.

NATALIE

(sobbing)
I'm losing my mind.

Adena stoops down next to Natalie, wraps her arms around her shoulders, hugging her like a mother comforts a child.

ADENA

There, there, sister. Everything is going to be fine.

Natalie sobs into Adena's shoulder.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - MORNING

Natalie in a fetal position on the bed, facing the wall.
Adena stands on watch - bedside.

Malcam enters.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Any change?

Adena shakes her head. Malcam strokes his chin - thinks.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Natalie, this has to stop.

NATALIE

(her back to Malcam)
I want out. I'm not safe here.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Would you feel safer in prison?

This gets Natalie's attention, she turns over - rights herself. There's anger on her face.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Do you really think when we inform the Court that you tried to escape you're just going to be sent to another treatment facility?

NATALIE

I'd rather be in prison.

Natalie buries her head in her hands - weeps.

NATALIE

I'm not having delusions. It's real. She's warning me.

Malcam nears the bed.

DOCTOR MALCAM

She?

NATALIE

Maria.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You've been through a lot, Natalie. Forced to come here. Forced to deal with your addiction. Grace's tragic suicide. You don't think those traumas play tricks with your mind? Do you really think it's more rational to conclude that you're visited by a ghost rather than suffering PTSD?

NATALIE

Please, just let me go. I can't sleep. I'm losing my mind here.

Malcam takes a seat near Natalie, places his hand on her shoulder.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I'm not going to give up on you.

Natalie's lips quiver - she wants to give up.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I'm going to give you something to help you rest. We need to address your deprivation first. I want you to stay in your cottage. Become refreshed.

Malcam removes a syringe needle from his pocket.

NATALIE

Wait - no --

Malcam pierces Natalie's upper arm with the needle.

NATALIE

Jesus! What are you...what..are...

Natalie's eyelids flutter, then close as she falls back on the bed.

Malcam stands, waves Adena over.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Adena, please.

As Malcam exits, Adena grabs Natalie's legs, moves her full body on to the bed. She places a pillow neath Natalie's head.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - MORNING

Morning light just starting to fill the room.

Natalie, asleep in bed, stirs.

A moment later, her eyes open. She just stays there for several moments - a bit disoriented.

A KNOCK on the door.

NATALIE

Yes.

ADENA (O.S.)

It's Adena.

Natalie rises from bed, goes to the door, cracks it open.

ADENA

I just wanted to make sure you were feeling better.

Natalie runs her hand through her hair.

NATALIE

Yeah...How long have I been asleep?

ADENA

Long enough it would seem, sister.
Get yourself ready.

Natalie nods, shuts the door as Adena strolls away.

IN THE BATHROOM - A BIT LATER

Natalie, now showered and dressed, fluffs her hair in the mirror. Satisfied with her appearance she enters the --

BEDROOM

And retrieves the BIG BOOK OF AA, her journal and a pen from the atop the nightstand.

Headed for the door, Natalie stops at the TV and stares at it for a moment.

She reaches down, removes the TV plug from the electrical socket in the wall, then exits.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MORNING

The Women eating breakfast, chatting - reading.

Natalie, tray in hand enters from the kitchen. She takes a seat one chair away from Sharon.

NATALIE

Hey...

Sharon looks up, nods - but doesn't respond as she returns to her meal. There's a bit of tension here.

NATALIE

Look, I'm sorry about the other day. When I said I didn't give a shit about your family. I do. I was just being an ass. Probably because I don't have...anyone.

Sharon looks over.

NATALIE

Are we good?

A smile crosses Sharon's face.

SHARON

Yeah, why not...

Sharon scoots over, bubbling with excitement now.

SHARON

I got great news. Doctor Malcam told me I'm ready to go home.

NATALIE

When?

SHARON

Saturday!

MONTAGE OF EVENTS

MALCAM'S OFFICE - Natalie on the sofa taking notes as Malcam counsels her.

MORNING RECOVERY MEETING - The Women forming their chairs in a semicircle getting reading for a meeting.

REAR COMPOUND - PICNIC AREA. A light dinner outside for all of the Women. Adena reads from the BIG AA BOOK as she walks around the picnic table.

Natalie looks to her right, catches Harley's eyes as he rakes some leaves neath an oak tree.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

The meeting's still in progress. Jolene at the front of the room, now just done with her story, takes her seat.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Natalie, it's your turn.

Natalie nervously removes a folded piece of paper from her journal - her Moral Inventory.

Natalie trembles as she stands, the paper shakes in her hand as she walks toward the front of the room.

Once there, she swallows, clears her throat.

NATALIE

My moral inventory. One...

(big inhale/exhale)

I put my needs before the needs of others. Um, two, I lie. Constantly.

Natalie looks out over the group, licks her dry lips.

NATALIE

Three, I might be...um. I might..

SUPER: STEP FIVE

We've admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Be responsible for the death of your mother?

Dead silence.

Natalie locks eyes with Malcam - *how did he know?* His eyes are firm and unblinking, as if staring into her soul.

Natalie looks away. She really doesn't want to do this.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Did you cause your mother's death?

NATALIE

(weepy)

Maybe...

INSERT FLASHBACK - SEDAN - TRAVELING - SIX YEARS AGO

Natalie, then 24, in the passenger seat, glaring out the passenger window - angry.

Her MOTHER (52) is at the wheel. She senses the tension.

MOTHER

What's troubling you, hon?

No response, Natalie just stares out the window.

MOTHER

Natalie, what is it?

NATALIE

I was going through some old boxes yesterday. From the old house.

MOTHER

Really? I thought all those were long gone.

NATALIE

I found Emma's diary.

An ugly pause.

MOTHER

She kept one?

NATALIE

You knew, didn't you?

MOTHER

What's that, dear?

NATALIE

You! Knew! It's in her diary. Emma told you. You didn't stop it.

The Mother's knuckles whiten as she clutches the wheel.

NATALIE

Why didn't you stop it?

The Mother glances back and forth between the road and Natalie. The panic of being caught consumes her face.

MOTHER

I couldn't...You have to understand. I wanted to keep us all together.

NATALIE

Bullshit!

MOTHER

Please...Natalie, I can't lose you too. You're all I have left.
(tears streaming)
Please.

NATALIE

How the fuck can you live with yourself?

The Mother takes her eyes off the road, looks toward Natalie.

MOTHER

I don't have any other choice.

Natalie looks forward - sees that the light at the upcoming intersection has turned red.

NATALIE

Mom, the light.

MOTHER

I'm sorry, baby. Truly sorry.

NATALIE

(panicked)
Mom!

The sedan speeds through the red light.

OVER BLACK

The BLARE of car horns.

The SQUEAL of brakes.

The sickening THUD of metal hitting metal.

BACK TO SCENE - MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

Tears streak from Natalie's reddened eyes.

Adena stands, hands Natalie a tissue. Natalie dabs her eyes.

NATALIE

I can't do this anymore.

Natalie takes a seat next to Sharon.

DOCTOR MALCAM

What did you find, Natalie?

NATALIE

Pardon?

DOCTOR MALCAM

In your sister's diary.

NATALIE

Why does that matt --

DOCTOR MALCAM

What - did - you - find?

A moment passes.

NATALIE

My stepfather had been molesting
Emma, my sister....For years.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Emma didn't die of cancer, did she?

Natalie shakes her head.

NATALIE

She hung herself.

Malcam strokes his chin - thinks. Natalie shifts in her seat,
uncomfortable with the situation.

DOCTOR MALCAM

We've admitted the exact nature of
our wrongs. Exact is the most
important word in step five.
Precision is essential.

Malcam stands, walks toward Natalie - stands right in front
of her.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Your addiction was never the result
of physical pain.

(re: her heel)

And I believe you understand that
now.

Natalie nods.

DOCTOR MALCAM

That leaves your emotional pain.
Self-medication for a tortured
soul. You would have us believe
that the remorse you live with is
the death of your mother and the
role you played in it?

NATALIE

Yes...

DOCTOR MALCAM

No.

Malcam puts both his hands on Natalie's shoulders and looks
her directly in the eyes.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Your pain isn't rooted in your
mother's death.

NATALIE

How would you know?

DOCTOR MALCAM

Because you didn't hate your mother
for her failure to protect your
sister.

Natalie's face reddens, her lips quiver.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You hated yourself. You still do.

NATALIE

No...

DOCTOR MALCAM

You hate yourself because you
didn't stop your sister's
molestation. You knew about it and
you didn't do anything. Isn't that
the exact nature of your wrong,
Natalie? Isn't that the real pain
you are medicating?

NATALIE
 (bursting in grief)
 Yes.

Natalie sobs into her hands.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Natalie and Sharon in an embrace outside the meeting room.

SHARON
 I'm going to miss you. Make sure
 you look me up when you get out.

NATALIE
 I will.

They break the embrace.

SHARON
 Naw, you won't. But that's okay.

NATALIE
 Of course I --

SHARON
 You know you made real good
 progress tonight, girl. I was so
 proud of you - sharing like that.
 You're really on your way now.

NATALIE
 I hope so.

SHARON
 I'm going to pray for you. It's
 time you pray for yourself. You
 know that - right?

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - NIGHT

Heavy fog is in the air. A full moon gives it an eerie ghost-like glow.

Natalie strolls toward Saint Maximilian's fountain. She stops and stares at it, as if looking for a sign.

Natalie shakes her head - there's nothing there.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie scooped up in bed, knees up, writing in her journal.

A sudden chill consumes her body. She runs her arms - trying to warm up.

Natalie pulls the covers up to her chin, then returns her focus to her journal.

NATALIE (V.O.)
(as she writes)
I shared my moral inventory
tonight. Funny, I thought creating
one in the first place was dumb.

Natalie shivers again - the chill is back. She shakes it off.

NATALIE (V.O.)
(as she writes)
I couldn't have been more wrong. It
was life-changing...Why am I always
so stubborn? Like a child that
won't believe a stove is hot until
she burns her hand.

Just then, the pages of her journal flutter over, as if blown that way by a breeze. It stops on a blank page.

Natalie trembles as, without any control of her own, her hand moves the pen to the blank page.

Natalie starts to write, but not of her own will. Some force is moving her hand. Slowly forming one word at a time:

IT

ENDS

AT

STEP

SEVEN

The journal shakes in Natalie's hands. She finds the strength to toss it against the wall.

She jumps out of bed, bolts toward the door and --

EXT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Rushes outside. She paces back and forth.

NATALIE
It's not happening. It's not
happening. It's not happening.

Natalie heads off toward --

SAINT MAXIMILIAN'S FOUNTAIN

She falls to her knees at the base of the fountain.

NATALIE
I need help. Please.

SUPER: STEP SIX

We're entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Natalie stoops over and cups the fountain's water in her hand. She brings her hands to her face and immerses it in the water - a self baptism of sorts.

Natalie gazes at the statue.

NATALIE
Please...

A BIT LATER

The fog has moved out. Natalie, illuminated by the light of the full moon, stands by the statue.

She appears peaceful - content.

She takes a deep breath, then heads back toward her cottage.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dark. Natalie asleep in bed.

The Ghost of Maria kneels down bedside, hands folded in prayer.

GHOST OF MARIA
(quiet - reverent)
Grant, O Lord, thy protection and
in protection, strength. And in
strength, understanding. And in
understanding, knowledge. And in
knowledge, the knowledge of
justice...

Natalie opens her eyes. Somehow she's no longer frightened. As if there is an acceptance of this presence.

NATALIE
Maria...?

GHOST OF MARIA

I pray for you.

(a beat)

My journal has your answer.

(beat)

Harley is its keeper.

INT. REAR COMPOUND - MAINTENANCE BUILDING - CRACK OF DAWN

A standard maintenance facility.

One end of the building is filled with tools, rope, supplies, landscaping equipment and the like.

On the other end, a makeshift home. A cot for sleeping. A small dresser, sink, stove - a place for Harley to live.

Harley's at the stove pouring himself a cup of coffee.

TAP - TAP on the door at the other end of the building.

Harley picks up his cup, walks toward the door and opens it.

It's Natalie.

NATALIE

Can I come in?

HARLEY

Don't see why not.

Natalie enters.

HARLEY

(raising his cup)

You want some?

NATALIE

No - thanks. Hey, do you happen to remember a patient here named Maria?

Harley takes a sip of coffee, swirls it in his mouth a bit.

HARLEY

Yeah...We all do.

Natalie looks confused.

HARLEY

Maria Bennett. She threw herself off that cliff behind your cottage, bout four years ago.

NATALIE

Oh, my God.

HARLEY

Why in the world would you be asking about her?

NATALIE

I can't say...

Harley takes another sip of coffee as he takes the measure of Natalie - something ain't right here.

HARLEY

I got to get started on the day.

Harley starts toward the other end of the building.

Natalie follows.

NATALIE

Who picked up her personal belongings? After..she um --

Harley stops walking, turns back toward Natalie.

HARLEY

Killed herself.

Natalie nods.

HARLEY

No one. She didn't have any family.

NATALIE

So what happened to her things? You know, her clothes, jewelry - her journal?

HARLEY

I boxed all her stuff up.

Harley looks around the building.

HARLEY

Stored it here somewhere.

NATALIE

Can I see it?

HARLEY

Why?

NATALIE

I need to.

HARLEY

That ain't a good enough reason.
Besides, I couldn't give it to you
even if I did have it. Patient
privacy and all.

NATALIE

Please...

HARLEY

Not a chance.

NATALIE

I just need to --

HARLEY

No.

Natalie nods, she'll have to figure out another way. She
turns to leave - stops.

NATALIE

You sure you can't --

HARLEY

Positive.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LEARNING CENTER - DAY

All of the Women at computer work stations looking at a
variety of web sites dedicated to meditation.

Adena circles the room as she talks.

ADENA

There are several recommended forms
of meditation including progressive
relaxation, mindfulness meditation,
transcendental meditation, and many
others.

AT NATALIE'S WORK STATION

Rather than a meditation page, she has the GOOGLE SEARCH BAR
open. She types in: "MARIE BENNETT."

ADENA (O.S.)

Your objective today will be to
find a method you think would work
best for you.

INT. REAR COMPOUND - MAINTENANCE BUILDING - SAME TIME

Harley is putting away tools. He feels a sudden chill, rubs his arms for warmth.

HARLEY

Jesus...

As he walks toward the other end of the building, a storage box falls off the shelf to the floor.

When it hits, the box turns over and opens. A few items, including Grace'S JOURNAL, tumble out.

Harley looks toward the top of the shelf - a *how the hell did that happen* - look on his face.

Harley bends over, scoops up the items, tosses them back into the box. That is until he gets to the journal.

He stares at it for a moment, then opens it.

As he reads, he walks toward the other side of the building, not taking his eye off the page.

He takes a seat on the edge of a cot - continues to read.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - LEARNING CENTER - DAY

Adena still circling and giving instructions as the Women research on their computers.

AT NATALIE'S WORK STATION

On the computer screen, a dated newspaper article: WOMAN'S BODY FOUND ON CANYON ROAD.

ADENA (O.S.)

If anyone has any questions, please don't hesitate to ask....Natalie, you've been quiet.

In a rush, Natalie closes the page with the NEWSPAPER ARTICLE and a page dedicated to MEDITATION AND YOGA appears.

Adena appears behind Natalie's shoulders.

ADENA

Are you finding what you need?

Natalie points at the screen.

NATALIE

Yes. There's some good stuff here.

A BIT LATER

The Women gather their things, readying themselves to leave.

Adena provides a warm smile as each passes her on the way to the door.

ADENA

Good work, sisters. Enjoy your dinner.

Once the room is empty, Adena goes to Natalie's work station and takes a seat.

She taps the keyboard - the computer comes alive.

She opens the GOOGLE APP and clicks on search history. The first item that appears on the screen is: "MARIA BENNETT."

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - DUSK

Malcam at his desk reading a case file.

ADENA (O.S.)

There's something you should know.

Malcam looks up.

ADENA

It's about Natalie.

EXT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie strolls up toward the front door.

She turns the handle and enters --

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

And stretches for the light switch. But in an instant --

A MAN'S HAND hand covers her mouth.

NATALIE

(muffled)

No...Help.

HARLEY

It's me. Harley. I ain't here to hurt you. Understand?

Natalie gives a trembling nod.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - SAINT MAXIMILIAN'S FOUNTAIN - SAME TIME

Adena strolls by the statue.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - SAME TIME

Harley releases his hold on Natalie. Flips the light switch.

Natalie instinctively backs away toward the bed as she spots a hunting knife holster hooked to Harley's belt.

Harley removes Maria's JOURNAL tucked in his waistband neath his shirt. He tosses it toward Natalie. She snatches it out of the air.

HARLEY

Open it.

Natalie opens the journal. Her eyes widen as she reads.

HARLEY

It rambles a lot. But it's pretty clear.

Natalie still engrossed in the journal.

HARLEY

She had to submit to him. It was step...

NATALIE

Seven.

Harley nods. Natalie flips more pages.

NATALIE

She killed herself because she thought she sinned?

Natalie still engrossed in the journal.

HARLEY

Yeah. And it says she wasn't the first. Wasn't going to be the last.

NATALIE

Oh, my God. Do you think Grace...?

HARLEY

No way of knowing. Has he tried something with --

NATALIE

No...not yet.

Harley thinks for a moment.

HARLEY

I need to get some more
information.

NATALIE

You need to get me out of here.
You have keys to the gate. We could
--

HARLEY

Maria wasn't exactly stable,
Natalie.

(re: the journal)

You can tell from reading that.
Give me a day or two to figure out
what's going on. Hold tight.

A KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK on the door.

ADENA (O.S.)

Natalie?

Natalie motions with her head toward the bathroom. Harley
makes his way there - enters.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK

ADENA (O.S.)

Natalie, are you okay?

NATALIE

Just a minute.

She takes a deep breath, goes to the door and opens it.

Adena enters the cottage, looks around, then back at Natalie.

ADENA

I thought I heard someone.

NATALIE

No, it was just the uh, TV. I was
watching a tutorial...Is there
something you needed?

Adena scans the room again - something ain't right.

ADENA

Doctor Malcam asked that I check up
on you. He wanted to make sure you
settled on a meditation method.

(MORE)

ADENA (CONT'D)

He thought it might help with your sleep.

NATALIE

Yes. I did. Thank you.

ADENA

Let's take a walk, sister. Talk about it.

NATALIE

No need, really.

ADENA

I want to make sure you have a clear head before you go to sleep.

NATALIE

Sure...okay. I was just going to use the restroom. Give me a sec?

Adena nods. Natalie smiles, heads toward the --

BATHROOM

And enters, closing the door behind her. Harley leans up against the wall behind the door. Natalie puts her finger to her lips in a hush motion.

Harley motions toward the journal, Natalie gives it to him.

He removes a pen from his pocket, opens the journal to a blank page and writes: *"We'll talk tomorrow."*

He hands the journal back to Natalie. She reads his note, nods, starts to exit.

Harley grabs her shoulder - stops her. He removes his hunting knife from its leather sheath then sets it on the sink.

He then leans over, flushes the toilet.

HARLEY

(re: the knife - mouthing)
Just in case.

Natalie nods. Then goes to the sink and runs water for a moment. She takes a deep breath, opens the bathroom door.

NATALIE

(feigned cheerfulness)
I'm ready.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The door opens - it's Natalie.

NATALIE
(over her shoulder)
Thanks, Adena.

ADENA
Sleep well, sister.

Natalie enters the cottage, closes the door behind her, takes a deep breath of relief. Then heads toward the --

BATHROOM

And picks up the hunting knife Harley left. She turns it side to side inspecting the sharpness of the blade.

Back to the --

BEDROOM

Natalie slides the knife between her mattress and box spring.

She sits on the edge of the bed, opens the top drawer of the nightstand and retrieves Maria's journal - opens it.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The dead of night. Everything is dark except for --

Harley, with a pen flashlight clenched between his teeth trying his best to pick the lock on Malcam's file cabinet.

No luck. It won't budge.

HARLEY
God Damn it.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - SAME TIME

Natalie in bed, Maria's journal in her hand.

THE VOICE OF MARIA (V.O.)
(as Natalie reads)
*I must submit. He demands it. God
forbids it. What to do? He demands
it yet...*

Natalie turns the page

THE VOICE OF MARIA (V.O.)
 (as Natalie reads)
*The Bible forbids it. Colossians
 three point five. Put to death
 whatever belongs to your earthly
 nature: sexual immorality,
 impurity, lust, evil desires.*

Natalie swallows hard, wipes a tear from her eye.

THE VOICE OF MARIA (V.O.)
 (as Natalie reads)
*I must extinguish my own light
 before it is too late.*

NATALIE
 Oh, Maria...

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - BATHROOM - SUNRISE

Natalie inside a steam-filled shower.

She closes her eyes and tilts her head back to let the hot water massage her scalp.

Moments later --

She emerges from the shower, grabs a towel from the rack, dries her body.

She pats the towel against her face as she opens the bathroom door and enters the --

BEDROOM

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Good morning, Natalie.

Natalie jolts back, SCREAMS, clumsily covers her torso with the towel the best she can.

Malcam sits on the bed - perfect posture.

Natalie closes the door, just enough so that only her head peeks out.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 The worse kind of modesty is false modesty. And there's no need for it. I've seen your soul. Your body is of secondary interest at best.

NATALIE
 Get out.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I wanted to get an early start on the day. I was wondering, what step do you believe you are on, Natalie?

NATALIE

Get out!

Malcam stands. He looks toward the nightstand, spots what he believes is Natalie's journal. It's Maria's.

He grabs it.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Perhaps the answer is here.

NATALIE

(blurting out)

Six. I'm working step six.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I had hoped you would have progressed through step six by now. You're not ready to have God remove all the defects of your character?

NATALIE

I don't know...

Natalie trembles as Malcam nears the bathroom door.

DOCTOR MALCAM

There is a prayer for step six.

(reflecting)

In this moment, I am entirely ready to be freed of all my shortcomings.

In this moment, I am ready to surrender these defects of character --

Malcam walks back to the nightstand, tosses Maria's journal on top of it.

DOCTOR MALCAM

It means that in order to complete your recovery, you merely have to accept that you are ready to surrender.

Malcam turns back toward Natalie.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I want you to work on that today.

Malcam exits. Natalie slides down the length of the door jamb, relieved from his departure.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MORNING

As the Women eat breakfast, the clinks of utensils against their plates and the sound of idle chatter fills the room.

Natalie sits alone at the table once occupied by her, Sharon and Maria.

JESSICA (28), thin, brunette, with nervous eyes and carrying a tray of food enters. She scans the room, then approaches a chair at Natalie's table.

JESSICA
Do you mind?

NATALIE
(points at seat)
No, of course not.

Jessica places her tray on the table, sits down. Natalie resumes eating as she stares out the window. She spots Harley off in the distance in the rear compound.

JESSICA
(very nervous)
It's my first day. I came in last night.

Natalie still staring out the window.

NATALIE
Uh-huh.

JESSICA
Beats prison I guess.

That gets Natalie's attention.

NATALIE
Say again.

JESSICA
It was either a treatment program or prison. I'm probably not like most people here. You know, deciding to come on their --

NATALIE
You have family?

JESSICA

Pardon?

NATALIE

On the next family day, who will
come to visit you?

Jessica shakes her head - no one.

NATALIE

Who was your judge?

Jessica thinks for a moment - remembering.

JESSICA

Specter. Judge Specter. Why?

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - DAY

A beautiful day with crystal clear skies. The Women mill
about, Adena among them.

Natalie on a bench, feigning reading the BIG BOOK OF AA.

Harley just a few feet away, on his knees, repairing a
sprinkler head. Natalie talks to him without looking at him.

NATALIE

Her judge was Specter too. No
family, just like me.

Harley talks to Natalie without looking at her, keeps his
face pointed at his work.

HARLEY

I'll try to get back into his
office today. But I'm going to need
your help.

Natalie keeps her eyes focused on Adena to make sure she's
not watching.

NATALIE

Go on.

HARLEY

Talk to Malcam. Convince him to
have the meeting today outside - at
the picnic area.

NATALIE

How am I supposed to --

HARLEY

You're going to need to figure that out, girl. Can you do it?

NATALIE

Yes.

Harley gets up from his knees, wipes dirt from his pants.

HARLEY

Meet me in the maintenance building tonight - midnight. I'll let you know what I found.

Natalie nods. As Harley strolls away, Natalie locks eyes with Adena - gives her a warm smile.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Malcam in a chair across from the sofa, immersed in a patient file.

A TAP on the door jamb.

DOCTOR MALCAM

(not looking up)

Yes.

NATALIE (O.S.)

I just came by to thank you.

Malcam closes the file, turns his head toward Natalie.

NATALIE

For taking the time to talk to me this morning. It helped. I'm seeing things much clearer today.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Really...?

Natalie approaches Malcam's chair from the rear. She places her hands on his shoulders.

NATALIE

Yes. Maybe finally a moment of clarity.

Malcam reaches his hand back, places it on Natalie's hand.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You're welcome. Truly.

NATALIE

I would like a favor though. It's a beautiful day. Seems like a shame to waste it inside.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - PICNIC AREA - DAY

The Women gathered around Malcam and Adena. A recovery meeting just starting.

DOCTOR MALCAM

We have a new patient to welcome.
Jessica.

As Malcam motions for Jessica to stand, Harley pushes a cleaning cart by. The usual stuff - mop, broom, trash can, supplies and a vacuum cleaner.

Malcam catches his eye. Harley points toward the main house.

HARLEY

Thought I'd take advantage while it's empty. Going to do the floors.

Malcam nods.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Ready, Jessica?

HARLEY

Going to need the keys to your office though.

Malcam reaches into his pocket, tosses Harley a set of keys.

Harley snatches them out of the air, gives Malcam a smile then pushes the cart toward the main house.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Harley pushes the cart down the hallway until he reaches the door of Malcam's office. He inserts a key, turns the knob and enters --

MALCAM'S OFFICE

He removes the vacuum cleaner from the cart, carries it toward a window facing the rear compound.

Harley peeps out the window. In the distance, he spots Malcam in his chair at the picnic area.

Harley stations the vacuum next to the wall, leans down and plugs it in. The motor ROARS when he hits the on switch.

BACK AT THE PICNIC AREA

Malcam in his chair, looks toward the main house as he hears the muffled roar of the running vacuum.

He returns his attention to Jessica.

BACK IN MALCAM'S OFFICE

Harley inserts one of the keys on Malcam's keyring into the file cabinet lock. He turns and the door clicks open. At that exact moment --

A tiny dot glows on the frame of Malcam's computer screen.

BACK AT THE PICNIC AREA

Jessica still talking.

Malcam removes his smart-phone from his pocket. An "ALERT ICON" on the screen. He taps it and --

A live recording, POV the hidden camera on his computer screen, of Harley in Malcam's office appears on the phone.

BACK IN MALCAM'S OFFICE

Harley foraging through Malcam's file cabinets.

He finds a file labeled "MARIA BENNETT". He retrieves it, opens it up on the desk and ruffles through the contents.

He finds a PATIENT INTAKE DOCUMENT.

HARLEY
(reading)
Remanded by Judge Specter.

Harley runs his finger down the document - stops.

HARLEY
(reading)
Next of kin - none.

Harley goes back to the file cabinet. Finds the folder for NATALIE PORTER, places it on the desk.

Harley stops - thinks for a moment.

He goes back to the cabinet, retrieves a file with the name: GRACE NELSON.

Harley looks to his right, spots a small printer-copier machine in the corner of the room.

BACK AT THE PICNIC AREA

Jessica still talking.

Malcam has one eye on the screen of his smart-phone, the other on Natalie, her eyes still focused on the main house.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Malcam leans back in his chair watching the recorded tape on his computer screen of Harley rummaging his file cabinet.

The clock on his desk reads: "11:30 PM."

ADENA (O.S.)

The women are all down for the evening.

Malcam looks toward the door.

ADENA

Do you need anything else?

DOCTOR MALCAM

No. Thank you, Adena. Sleep well.

Adena nods, walks away.

Malcam stands, goes to a closet door and opens it revealing a large floor safe. He spins the reel of the lock.

INT. REAR COMPOUND - MAINTENANCE BUILDING - NIGHT

Dark, other than the light from a small lamp at the far end of the room.

There, Harley's on his cot studying the contents of the case files he copied earlier.

The front door creaks open. A silhouette appears within the frame of the door.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I believe that we need to talk.

The sound of Malcam's footsteps echoes in the building as he makes his way toward Harley. Now, visible, a medical bag in his left hand and some sort of GUN in his right hand.

Harley appears as calm as someone who used to be a Marine ought to be.

HARLEY

How did you know?

DOCTOR MALCAM

There's a security switch on all my desk drawers as well as the file cabinet. Once it's tripped, the camera on the computer screen activates.

HARLEY

Hmm. Clever.

Harley starts to stand.

DOCTOR MALCAM

No - no.

Harley resumes his seat on the cot. Malcam pulls up a small chair and now sits just a few feet away. He keeps the gun pointed at Harley as he sets his medical bag on the floor.

HARLEY

(re: the gun)

Don't recognize it.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I wouldn't expect you to.

Malcam rolls the gun back and forth as if inspecting it.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Tranquilizer gun. There are darts in the clip containing my own special blend of Ketamine. You'll feel lethargy instantly, perhaps a minute for your muscles to abandon you and about another minute for complete unconsciousness. In most cases, it's not fatal.

HARLEY

Good to hear.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Is it?

Harley doesn't answer, keep his eyes on the gun.

DOCTOR MALCAM

What were you hoping to find?

HARLEY

I believed that you raped Maria Bennett and that's why she threw herself off that cliff.

(MORE)

HARLEY (CONT'D)

I believe that you raped Grace. I believe you intend to do the same to Natalie.

Harley holds up the case file records.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Enlighten me, Harley.

HARLEY

All those women had no family. I supposed so that there was no one to complain to if there were any problems. And they were all sent here by the same Judge. Specter.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You're accusing me of coincidence? What is the penalty nowadays for that?

HARLEY

I read Maria Bennett's journal.

This gets Malcam's attention.

HARLEY

It's fairly detailed. Fairly incriminating.

Malcam looks around the room.

HARLEY

It ain't here.

A mock clap from Malcam.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You have more brains than I ever gave you credit for, Harley.

Malcam stands - paces as he keeps his eye on Harley.

DOCTOR MALCAM

But there were more than those three. This has been going on for years. Adena was the first one. Nearly fifteen years ago now. And to be clear, I didn't rape any of them.

HARLEY

Of course you did.

Malcam points the gun at Harley.

DOCTOR MALCAM
You - shut - up.

Malcam's agitated, losing control.

DOCTOR MALCAM
They all asked for it. They all submitted. Step seven. We've humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.

HARLEY
What?

DOCTOR MALCAM
I'm him. They submit to me to ensure their recovery. It takes a while. But as I remove their pain, they look to me as a savior.

A crazed look consumes Malcam's face.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Do you know how many fucking sad stories I've had to listen to? Whores whining about their own self-inflicted wounds! I deserved comfort for those efforts. I earned it! And they offered it!

HARLEY
Did Maria?

Malcam takes a seat - reflects. He almost looks sad.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Maria was a mistake. Her religious constitution turned out to be far too delicate. I should have known. But the others all ask for --

HARLEY
Has Natalie asked?

POP! A dart from Malcam's gun finds its way into the center of Harley's chest.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Not yet. But she will.

EXT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - SAME TIME

The door creeps open. Natalie pokes her head out to make sure the coast is clear.

Satisfied, she leaves, quietly closing the door behind her and heads out into the --

REAR COMPOUND

And scampers across the moon-lit ground, her head on a swivel looking for anyone or anything that might detect her.

MAINTENANCE BUILDING - SAME TIME

Harley stares at the dart in his chest. He stands - unsteady, his legs have abandoned him.

HARLEY

You're...insane.

DOCTOR MALCAM

A little.

Harley falls back on the cot, wobbles, then falls to the floor in a heap. He attempts to crawl - no use.

He turns over, flat on his back - a muscle twitch now and then, but otherwise motionless.

Malcam picks up his medical bag, then calmly walks to the sink, fills a glass with water.

He reaches in the medical bag, retrieves the plastic bag of OXYCODONE PILLS confiscated from Natalie on her first day.

He goes to Harley, bends down and pries his mouth open with his fingers.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Relapse.

Malcam pours half the bag of pills in Harley's mouth, followed by the water forcing him to swallow.

OUTSIDE THE MAINTENANCE BUILDING

Natalie quietly taps on the door. No response.

Another tap and still no response.

Natalie turns the door handle and enters the -

MAINTENANCE BUILDING - NIGHT

It's pitch black.

NATALIE
 (in a whisper)
 Harley...?
 (no response)
 Harley...?

A light goes on.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Good evening, Natalie.

NATALIE
 What have you --

POP! A dart from Malcam's gun finds its way into the center of Natalie's chest.

NATALIE
 Done...

Natalie collapses to the ground.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Malcam at his desk, phone to his ear.

DOCTOR MALCAM
 Yes, all of them out by tomorrow
 afternoon.
 (listening)
 No, there isn't any choice.
 (listening)
 Excellent. Thank you for your
 assistance, Adena.

Malcam places the phone back in the cradle, leans back in his chair, closes his eyes - bone tired.

EXT. JESSICA'S COTTAGE - MORNING

Adena waits outside the cottage.

Jessica exits the cottage, suitcase in hand.

JESSICA
 I don't understand. I just got
 here.

ADENA

I know, sister. It's unexpected.
Please join the other women in the
meeting room.

Jessica trudges off to the main house. Adena looks to her right. Several other Women, luggage in hand, make their way across the compound.

EXT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FRONT DRIVEWAY - DAY

A white SHUTTLE BUS parked, engine idling.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MEETING ROOM - DAY

All of the Women with the exception of Natalie assembled with their suitcases at their side.

DOCTOR MALCAM

We are coordinating placements for all of you. The Canyon Recovery Center has already agreed to take three. The Anderson House for Women has two slots available. We are working on the placements for the remainder.

JOLENE

All because of a gas leak?

DOCTOR MALCAM

I am sorry, but these precautions are necessary, at least until the utility can confirm the source of the leak.

JESSICA

Wait, where's Natalie?

DOCTOR MALCAM

Already transferred. First thing this morning.

JESSICA

I didn't hear any --

DOCTOR MALCAM

I'm confident that everyone will be relocated by the end of the day. I'm going to ask you to either stay in the dining room or the learning center as you wait for your turn.

(MORE)

DOCTOR MALCAM (CONT'D)
Adena will coordinate the intake process for each of you when you arrive at the new facility.

ADENA
Come, sisters.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - FOYER - DUSK

Malcam looks out the window.

MALCAM'S POV:

The last of the Women boarding the shuttle bus, Adena in tow.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - SUNSET

The last of the day's light slipping neath the horizon.

Malcam, with his medical bag in hand, makes his way to the --

INT. REAR COMPOUND - MAINTENANCE BUILDING - SUNSET

Natalie on her side on the floor, her hands and feet bound with rope, her face covered in duct tape.

Her tear filled eyes are locked on --

Harley's corpse. His eyes frozen open, remnants of dried saliva caked on his cheeks. A half-filled plastic bag of oxycodone pills in his dead hand.

Natalie trembles as she hears the CREAK of the door opening followed by the echo of heavy footsteps.

The flip of a light switch illuminates the room. Malcam's shadow appears on the floor.

DOCTOR MALCAM (O.S.)
Good evening, Natalie.

Malcam kneels down next to Harley's corpse. He gently closes Harley's eyelids then taps the plastic bag of pills resting on Harley's hand.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Ironic, isn't it? Your pills.

Natalie struggles to free herself as she tries to scream to no avail - the duct tape muffling the sound.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Sssh, sssh.

Malcam removes a syringe from the medical bag, taps it.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Don't worry. It's a small dose. But
I am going to need you out just a
little bit longer.

Natalie tries to wriggle away as Malcam plunges the tip of the needle into her forearm.

He removes a small pair of surgical scissors from the medical bag and gently cuts the duct tape covering Natalie's mouth.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I am sorry about the tape.

Natalie's eyes close. She's now motionless.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

The FOG has rolled in, eerily brightened by a full moon.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Dark on the door side of the room. Light cascading from the bathroom partially illuminates the bed area. In that bed --

Natalie, completely naked and unconscious. Her arms and legs bound by straps connected to the frame of the bed.

SUPER: STEP SEVEN

We've humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Natalie awakens, immediately sensing the straps binding her arms and legs. Panicked, she jerks against the straps.

DOCTOR MALCAM (O.S.)

You are so unyielding.

Just then, Natalie realizes that she is naked. She pulls against the straps even harder.

DOCTOR MALCAM (O.S.)

So stubborn.

NATALIE

Help! Help!

Malcam emerges from the darkness near the door, Maria's journal in his hand.

DOCTOR MALCAM

They're gone, Natalie.

Malcam scans the room.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Unless you were calling for your
ghost. I didn't see her.
(mocking)
Where could she have gone?

Malcam takes a seat at the end of the bed. He holds up
Maria's journal.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Quite the read.

Malcam stands, goes to the bathroom, turns on the faucet.

DOCTOR MALCAM
If only she had gone with the
program.

Malcam looks at his face in the mirror, his eyes reddened
from sleep deprivation.

He cups some water, splashes it on his face.

DOCTOR MALCAM
None of this would have happened.

Malcam returns to the foot of the bed. He cradles Natalie's
heel in his hand.

DOCTOR MALCAM
I provided you relief from your
physical pain...
(caressing her foot)
Is it still gone?

A WHIMPER from Natalie.

Malcam moves to the center of the bed and places the tip of
his finger on Natalie's thigh.

Natalie's eyes bounce back and forth in panic.

DOCTOR MALCAM
And I discovered the real source of
your addiction. Your sister and
your pathetic all-consuming guilt
for her death. Did that not give
you relief?

Malcam runs the tip of his finger from Natalie's naked thigh
to her neck. He locks his reddened eyes on hers.

Natalie trembles in fear. A tear streaks down her cheek as she squeezes her eyes shut.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Like you, Maria was on step seven.
Nearly cured. All she had to do was
humbly asked me to remove her
shortcomings. That is all I expect
of you, Natalie.

He extends his hand toward Natalie's hair and caresses it between his fingers.

Natalie squeezes her eyes shut, trembles.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Do you know now how your
shortcomings are removed?

Natalie, eyes still closed, shakes her head.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Submission. You must ask me. As the
others had.

Malcam runs his hand from the nape of Natalie's neck to her breasts. The intensity of his breathing rises.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Ask me to take you. To be inside of
you. Willingly. It's no good if
forced. It must be something
requested, something given in
return.

Natalie opens her eyes.

NATALIE

And if I don't?

DOCTOR MALCAM

I would not take you.

He reaches in his pocket, pulls out the half-filled plastic bag of oxycodone pills.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You would merely suffer the same
fate as Harley.

Natalie's eyes blink rapidly, the wheels are turning.

NATALIE

I submit.

A deranged smile crosses Malcam's face. He starts to remove his shirt.

NATALIE

No.

Natalie yanks on the straps that bind her hands.

NATALIE

It must be done freely. Isn't that what you said?

DOCTOR MALCAM

I did.

Malcam removes the straps that bind Natalie's hands to the frame of the bed.

He runs his finger the length of her body as he moves toward the foot of the bed.

He unbinds Natalie's feet.

Her entire body quivers in fear as Malcam removes his clothes then slowly inches up the bed to take her. As he does --

Natalie uses her right hand to search between the mattress and the box spring, fumbling for Harley's hunting knife.

She finds the knife, curls her finger around its handle.

Malcam's lust-ridden face reaches her.

Natalie's knife finds Malcam's torso.

DOCTOR MALCAM

Ahhhhhh!

Malcam dismounts from the bed, blood gushing from the wound. He covers it with his hand.

Natalie scrambles to the bathroom, slams the door behind her.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You ungrateful bitch!

Malcam removes his hand from the wound. Blood seeps out.

BATHROOM

Natalie on the floor, her back against the door as if somehow that would block entry.

A moment passes.

SLAM - the shutting of the front door.

EXT. REAR COMPOUND - NIGHT

Malcam, holding his white pants to his wound stumbles across the compound toward the main house.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie, removes the brown robe from the closet, wraps herself in it. She rushes to the front door --

Reaches it, tries the handle. No luck. It's locked from the outside.

She rushes to the window, flings open the drapes, shakes the iron bars as if somehow she could loosen them. Not a chance.

INT. RESTORATION HOUSE - MALCAM'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Malcam, now clad in the bloody white slacks, grimaces in pain as he wraps a large white medical bandage around his torso.

INT. NATALIE'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Natalie struggles to push the bed up against the interior of the door. She sits against it, hoping her weight will somehow help preclude entry.

INTERCUT BETWEEN OUTSIDE AND INSIDE THE COTTAGE

OUTSIDE: Malcam reaches the door, unlocks the exterior lock and pushes. The door won't budge.

INSIDE: A primal SCREAM as Natalie pushes her back against the bed with every ounce of strength she has left.

OUTSIDE: Malcam spots Harley's axe at the nearby woodpile.

INSIDE: Quiet. Natalie listens. Is he gone?

OUTSIDE: Malcam has the axe raised over his head.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I took away your physical pain!

WHACK - the axe strikes the door

INSIDE: Splintered wood as the tip of the axe protrudes through the door. Natalie SCREAMS.

OUTSIDE: Malcam raises the axe again.

DOCTOR MALCAM
I took away your emotional pain!

WHACK - the axe strikes the door

INSIDE: More splintered wood. Another SCREAM.

Natalie's eyes bounce as she scans the room. No weapons available and the door is not going to hold.

She takes a huge breath of courage.

OUTSIDE: Malcam rests his hands on his knees, takes a breath. The exertion is taking its toll. He raises the axe again.

DOCTOR MALCAM
I should not have to demand
repayment!

WHACK - the axe strikes the door and this time --

The door swings open. Natalie had moved the bed away. Malcam stumbles past her as she escapes out the door. But --

OUTSIDE

Natalie trips, sprawls to the ground.

A manic Malcam emerges from the cabin.

Natalie tries to get up, stumbles again.

A panting Malcam now hovers over her.

NATALIE
No!

Malcam collapses down upon Natalie, wraps his hands around her neck.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Submit.

Natalie's face reddens. She claws at Malcam's forearms with her nails.

DOCTOR MALCAM
Submit!

Natalie's face contorts, reddens further. Her panicked eyes lock on Malcam's enraged eyes.

GHOST OF MARIA (O.S.)
I will.

The tensions in Malcam's arms fade as he looks toward the --

FENCE BY THE CLIFF

Standing in front of the small fence, the Ghost of Maria, her hair dancing in the night breeze.

Malcam releases his grip on Natalie and stands.

Natalie coughs and hacks as she tries to catch her breath.

Malcam is mesmerized, as if having a front-row seat to his past.

DOCTOR MALCAM

I tried to stop you. There was no
need for you to jump.

An exhausted Malcam stumbles toward the vision of Maria, as if drawn there without choice.

DOCTOR MALCAM

You didn't have to. You were cured.

He reaches the fence.

GHOST OF MARIA

(at Natalie)

Now...

Maria fades into the night.

DOCTOR MALCAM

What..?

Natalie rises to her feet and rushes forward toward Malcam.

He turns, just in time so see her coming - too late.

Natalie shoves Malcam in the middle of the chest with all her might.

Malcam falls backwards hitting the fence rails exactly at the spot where Maria just stood. The same spot she had jumped from four years earlier.

The rails, somehow weakened, splinter as Malcam's body hits them. He falls forward.

Malcam flails for a post - misses. Attempts to keep his balance, but the ground is too slick. He stumbles back and --

ROARS IN ANGER

As he falls down the cliff to the abyss below.

Natalie falls to her knees, cradles her face in her hand and sobs uncontrollably.

OVER BLACK

The slow BEEP-BEEP, BEEP-BEEP of heart rate emanating from a medical monitor.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

An ELDERLY WOMAN, pale and frail in bed. The lines from electrodes neath her hospital gown snake their way toward a monitor.

A fluid tube travels from the Elderly's Woman's wrist to a plastic fluid bag hanging from a bedside IV-stand.

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

Natalie, clad in a nurse's uniform, carrying a small tray with two pills and a small paper cup of water on it enters.

NATALIE

Time for your meds.

Natalie approaches the bed.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Thank goodness. The pain is unbearable.

Natalie hands the Elderly Woman the cup of water and two OXYCONTIN PILLS.

NATALIE (V.O.)

I was lucky enough to get a job at a small town hospital.

The Elderly woman takes the pills, then a sip of water - struggles a bit to swallow.

Natalie caresses the Elderly Woman's hair.

NATALIE

They'll only take a minute.

ELDERLY WOMAN

(handing the cup back)
Thank you. You're an angel.

Natalie takes this in - then smiles.

EXT. SMALL TOWN HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Natalie, now dressed in civvies makes her way across the lot.

NATALIE (V.O.)
Ten women eventually came forward.
I'm sure there were more...

Natalie reaches her modest, used sedan. She enters it.

INT. SEDAN - NIGHT

Natalie buckling her belt.

NATALIE (V.O.)
When Judge Specter was arrested,
they discovered more than thirty
women he referred to the
Restoration House.

Inserts the key in the ignition.

NATALIE (V.O.)
His trial is still pending.

Natalie pulls out.

INT/EXT. SEDAN - SMALL TOWN ROAD - (TRAVELLING) NIGHT

Natalie drives down the main street of a small, rural town.

NATALIE (V.O.)
Adena chose her own fate.

FLASHBACK - REAR COMPOUND - BY THE CLIFF - NIGHT

Adena at the edge of the cliff.

She leans forward, falls to her death.

NATALIE (V.O.)
Loyal to the very end.

INT/EXT. SEDAN - SMALL TOWN DOWN ROAD - (TRAVELLING) NIGHT

Natalie stops at a traffic light.

She looks to her right, gazes at --

A CATHOLIC CHURCH, it's stained-glassed windows glowing in the night from the light inside.

NATALIE (V.O.)
I'm still working on finding a
higher power.

The light changes. Natalie moves on.

NATALIE (V.O.)
I'm getting there.

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Natalie's sedan pulls into the lot. A couple dozen cars are
already there.

Natalie exits her car.

NATALIE (V.O.)
I got to just keep at it...just
keep working the steps.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

An AA meeting is in progress.

About thirty PEOPLE. Various ages - both genders sit in
folded chairs listening to A MALE ADDICT at a podium.

Natalie is among them. A FRAIL WOMAN (28) sits next to her,
head bowed.

NATALIE (V.O.)
I hope Maria found peace.

MALE ADDICT
Okay, do we have any newcomers
tonight?

Natalie reaches over - squeezes the Frail Woman's hand, gives
her a reassuring nod.

MALE ADDICT
Anyone...?

FRAIL YOUNG WOMAN
Yes.

The Frail Young Woman stands, makes her way to the podium.
Once there, she grabs the sides of the podium for support as
she finds the courage to speak.

FRAIL YOUNG WOMAN
My name is Emma. And I'm an
alcoholic.

EVERYONE IN UNISON
Welcome, Emma.

EMMA
I want to thank Natalie for
bringing me here tonight.

NATALIE (V.O.)
Emma. The coincidence is not lost
on me. But who am I to question
anything any more...

EMMA
(weepy)
I probably should be dead already.

NATALIE
One day at a time.

FADE OUT.